MEDITATIONS

00068039

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Royal Asiatic Society.

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BY

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LONDON:
THE THEOSOPHICAL PUBLISHING SOCIETY,
161, NEW BOND STREET, W.
1908

DEDICATION.

To the memory of those Great Ones, who, though They have passed out of sight, ever live in the hearts of Their disciples, these imperfect thoughts, suggested by Their teachings, are dedicated in humility and reverence.

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PREFACE.

THE following essays are published in collected form at the request of various friends.

The substance of the first two "Thoughts" appeared in *The Theosophical Review*, the three succeeding ones are reprinted from *Broad Views*, "The Descent of Spirit" from *The Theosophist*. I wish to acknowledge my obligation in the essay entitled "Thoughts from the Sea" to Rāma Prasād's work *Nature's Finer Forces*, and to Mr. G. R. S. Mead's translation of the *Chaldean Oracles*, in the "Meditation on Fire."

Into the final meditations everyone must read his own meaning, the Great Thoughts which I have striven there to place on record, are for striving humanity as far as they can receive them, of all nations, and for all time.

A. C. A.

Ayot St. Lawrence.
July, 1908.

"VEILED in word illusion never goeth one by darkness to the Holy Place, and when darkness is dispelled the One alone sees the Unity."

(AMṚIṬABINDU UPANIṢHAṬ.)

Christmas Thoughts.

A SULLEN wintry sky heavy with unfallen snow, small hungry birds huddling dolefully on bare branches, a general aspect of desolation in absolute contradiction of the festivity the calendar indicates: for it is the twenty-fifth of December, Christmas Day, and to whom among us does not this word unfold a panorama, open the door to memories grave and gay?

Before the petted darlings of our nurseries arises a vision of unlimited indulgence, an Arcadia of toys distributed by subservient elders, every enchantment of the kingdom of misrule.

To the little ones who fill to overflowing poorer homes, the gracious Christ-child brings a deeper joy, as they cuddle unwonted playthings and attack the good things benevolence has provided, almost with a sense of awe. Through the dreary winter days they have waited and longed for this festival, never have they questioned whence these good things come, or thought they might be forgotten. How easy to picture them clustered round the Master's knee, and hear the gracious words sanctifying infancy for all time, "of such is

the Kingdom of Heaven." And note the mothers' careworn faces brighten as they bend over the parcels that prove they have not been forgotten. "The poor have ye always with you."* Thank God for it; for where else can our weary hearts escape from the limitations that surround the self, and steep themselves in the pure happiness born of the joy we are allowed to bring into the lives of others?

For to those among us who are young no longer, whom the years have made "so sadly wise," Christmas wears a very different aspect and comes as a time of heart searching, of counting empty chairs, of aching longing for loved faces lost, of redoubled effort that the children may be joyous while their elders mourn: a time peradventure of progress, as every unselfish thought for others must bear fruit, and to smile when you fain would weep is a very real sacrifice to the spirit of the day.

This, and much else, was in my mind as I knelt in the little village church, and listened to the story of the Nativity. The eternal duality, the male and female aspect of Godhead, Earth and the fulness thereof; all this is imaged in the World Mother bending over her Divine Babe. Isis and Horus, Mary and Jesus, the type eternally of all Motherhood, commanding the love and reverence of the countless souls She brings to birth. And

* *St. Mark*, xiv. 7.

slowly the story unfolds itself, the coming of the Magi, the Star of Wisdom that guides all earnest seekers to the manger, the cave of initiation where the infant Saviour lies; the treasures laid at His feet, gold, frankincense and myrrh, the firstfruits of the awakened Spirit: Had the service dealt only with the sweet old myth hallowed by usage, tracing out its hidden meanings thus, it would have fallen on uncritical ears; but it was followed by the Athanasian Creed, and later, as if to emphasize the occult signification contained in it, the solemn injunction rang out from the altar: "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain."*

True now as then, this utterance of the Mosaic law might surely in the dark ages of the Church, have preserved the sacred memory of the Great Master of the West in its beautiful simplicity, and made clear the ancient wisdom that fell so graciously from His lips.

Far off in the night of non-being, the Holy Trinity, a threefold emanation of the Godhead, came forth into the worlds It was to create, ensoul, and destroy. God the Father, the Creator, God the Son, the Wisdom, the builder up of forms, God the Holy Ghost, the Spirit who first moved in virgin matter, causing it to pulsate with the primary

* *Exodus*, xx., 7.

instinct of awakening life: making possible the evolution of forms by the second Logos, which later receive the outpouring from the first Logos, in which the soul is born. Behind this threefold manifestation of Godhead so well grasped in part of the Athanasian Creed, dwells the Eternal One; to be described by no sign or symbol, He who endures, merging eventually the glorious Trinity in His own effulgence, so that in some dim future, well-nigh impossible for us to grasp, God may be All in All. How far removed is this eternal truth from the tenets of the Catholic Church, which does not hesitate to incorporate the Second Person of the Trinity, the pervading creative Wisdom, with the life of a human teacher, and intrude into mysteries beyond mortal ken. God the Son, the shaper of immature man while the weary round of evolution was still untrodden, the gentle yet irresistible Power that through the mineral, vegetable, and animal kingdoms, led Him into the human form, set before Him the possibility of immortality. Surely when we grasp these facts we need no reminder from the Scriptures, it becomes impossible to take the name of such a God in vain.

The teaching of the Gospel appointed to be read on Christmas Day is purely esoteric, and shadows forth this truth. "In the beginning," it tells us, "was the Word, and the Word was with God, and

the Word was God. All things were made by Him, and without Him was not anything made. In Him was life, and the life was the light of men, and the light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not."* The word, the verbum, applys to that first quickening of matter, the throwing of its atoms into vibration, which starts all cosmic activities, the work of the third Logos just alluded to. This Word was with God, and ever is God, however varied the manifestation of It in the growth of universes may become.

It is to teach this great truth that all initiations were devised, every scripture written, trying to bring home to us this true light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world, the God not only without, but within us all. Ever is He in the world that knows Him not; in other forms besides the glorified one of the Christ, does He come to His own, who receive Him not.

His life pervades all created things, only are they held together by His power and love, every harmony, every discord even that plays upon the human heart carries with it the same glad tidings of great joy we listen to to-day. When sorrow and joy have done their work, and the purified soul turns with a great yearning to this wisdom which is divine, the promise still endures, "As many as

* *St. John*, i. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.

received Him, to them gave He power to become the Sons of God, even to them that believe on His name, which were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth."*

This is the mystery the life of the Christ was designed to teach. The image of the Supreme in all, renunciation of the separate self, through the garden of Gethsemane, The Cross of Calvary; resulting in the knowledge of our Sonhood, the new birth, not of the will of man, but of God.

And that beauteous life we celebrate to-day through the length and breadth of Christendom, that begotten of the Father full of grace and truth, surely needs no fables to render it fairer in the eyes of those to whom it reveals the divinity dormant in themselves. Does not our whole heart go up in gratitude to the Great One Who renouncing the liberation He had won, remained on Earth to teach us in our sore need; suffering that we may learn it is enough for the servant to be as his Lord, dying that we may live, to hand on the glad message He brought us, to those still in darkness and the shadow of spiritual death, that we may guide their feet into the way of peace?

* *St. John*, i. 12, 13, 14.

Let this be our Christmas lesson as we stand aside in the strife of orthodoxy, the babble of senseless merriment, the soothing ripple of children's laughter, strung like pearls among so much that is inharmonious and repels.

Love,—the love that does not fear to know, to sift fact from fiction, the informing spirit from the familiar legend; love, the one thing that endures when all around it perishes, that is content to wait, and trust. The love that will carry on the sacrifice we commemorate to-day, and giving itself freely, go forth and work for the Master, weaving into daily life, and homely duties, the message of His Christmas bells.

Lenten Thoughts.

"CURSED is the man that maketh any carved or molten image to worship it. Cursed are the unmerciful, fornicators, and adulterers, covetous persons, idolaters, slanderers, drunkards and extortioners. Amen."

With these illogical propositions the Church opens the penitential service known as the Commination with which she has seen fit to usher in the season of Lent. That, more or less, the worshipping of images set up in contradiction to eternal truths, underlies all her teaching, disturbs her not one whit; that if the unmerciful man is cursed that clause disposes of every anathema hurled at the heads of the evil-doers who succeed him, she does not pause to consider. The authoritative assertions go on, dust and ashes are metaphorically heaped on the heads of old women and young children, who make up the major part of the congregation; a revengeful God is duly invoked for the terror of these innocents, and then the little meeting breaks up, and, we may charitably hope, forget all about the proceedings till another Wednesday of Ashes brings it before them again.

This is the exoteric side of an observance that, rightly practised, contains important lessons for us all. Three out of the four Gospels give a detailed account of the temptation of Jesus, the exception being the esoteric Gospel of St. John. "Being full of the Holy Ghost," they tell us, "He returned from Jordan, and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, where He was forty days tempted by the Devil."*

How illuminative is this picture to the student of occultism, who realises so fully the difficulties in the upward path. The Power of Darkness came forth and enveloped this dauntless soul who had consecrated itself to the service of humanity and so thrown down the gauntlet of defiance to those whose work is to drag man down. Through weakness of the body enfeebled by its long fast, through spiritual pride proving the possession of superhuman powers, by the promise of the world and all the kingdoms thereof, humanity redeemed without the Garden of Gethsemane, or Cross of Calvary, saved by one fleeting act of homage; with all these suggestions did the tempter seek to destroy the Master's confidence in His Heaven-sent mission. Yet no cursing fell from His sacred lips. "Get thee behind me Satan" is the severest rebuke He uttered. What a lesson to His Church, who elects

* *St. Luke*, iv. 1, 2.

the Commination service to begin Lent, which commemorates Christ's preparation for His ministry. The rigid among her community fence it in with penitential practices, and enliven it with sensational services, the minor mortifications enjoined being of a nature to provoke more amazement than devotion in the rational observer. To the developed mind incapable of setting up as an object of devotion a God who can be measured with a carpenter's rule, Lent presents itself under other auspices. A season of picking up broken threads, of self-examination, of communing with that Higher Self so apt to be obscured in the toil and stress of daily life, a season of deep devotion where the spiritual insight is developed. Through the vista of years the gracious message reaches us: "Come unto Me, ye weary, and I will give you rest"; and so many of us are weary, weary of our responsibilities, of our pleasures, of our friends, but most of all weary of ourselves. The beautiful words of the writer of the *Imitation* find their echo in many hearts: "Oh God, Who art the Truth, make us one with Thee in everlasting love. We are often weary of hearing and reading many things, in Thee is all we need or desire. Let all teachers hold their peace, let all created things keep silence in Thy sight, speak Thou to me alone."

So Lent properly used comes to us as a time of

refreshment, of release from the various social engagements with which so many strive to fill the emptiness of their lives; face to face with the Divinity that is inherent in us, we ask ourselves how often we have been true to it, we single out some quality we are deficient in as we gather up the tangled skein of the past year. Our meditation will not be profitless if we endeavour to gain some sense of proportion with which to regulate our conduct when the world claims us again.

Let us dwell on the relative value of the things of sense that pall as quickly as they charm, and on things spiritual, enthralling hearts and intellect, on the grandeur of the divine ideal for man, and the grotesque inadequacy of his performance of it, on the fruit of the tree of knowledge awaiting the hand brave enough to grasp it, and the tinselled toys that arrest the seeker, toys that he must weary of and break himself before the first upward steps can be made.

Here we are confronted with a pitiless truth, the mis-statement of which has gone far in discrediting the teachings of the Christian Church. No man can redeem another; the sincerest love that ever welcomed sacrifice cannot impress this sense of fitness on the loved object; each climber must place his faltering feet on the upward path alone. All effort must be from within outwards; the sense

of proportion only dawns when the mental eyesight strengthens, when the magnifying glasses so long applied to objects of the senses are laid aside, and they appear in their true aspect as delusions of form that perish in the using.

Then we turn to our great Master Jesus and reverently follow Him through the three temptations so typical of the difficulties in His disciples' paths. Watching the stern purity with which He repels the suggestions of Satan, we recall with shame the stones of which we have made bread, the pride that has hurled us from the pinnacle of God's temple in our hearts, the disloyalty that has bowed our knees at the shrine of many a false idol in the kingdom of the world, and contemplating the extent of our fall we learn the great lesson of humility.

All knowledge is power, and the power to help others is the pure gold transmuted from the crucible of evil. It is the sense of separateness that makes such an impassable barrier between ourselves and the souls around us, so ignorant of the things pertaining to their peace; the weakness we have surmounted, the sin we have lived down, only draws us nearer to them when we understand that man cannot, does not live by bread alone, but by every word proceeding out of the mouth of the God whose reflection in this world he was meant to be.

The Easterns impress on us the same truth, "Let not the heaven-born merged in the sea of Mâyâ break from the universal soul."* One we must ever be in the divine life that informs us, separated only in manifestation, in our dense imprisonment in matter, to become One again in the day when our King makes up His jewels and the freed Spirit merges in the All-Consciousness whence it came and whither it must return. In the recognition of this Unity we make the mystical teaching of Lent our own, and, the forty days over, carry it back to elevate our daily lives.

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* *Voice of the Silence*, H. P. Blavatsky, Fragment I.

Easter Thoughts.

WINTER is past and gone. In our gardens the birds sing sweetly on bare branches, where all the possibilities of summer lie enfolded in tender pink buds. Slim daffodils nod to each other as the spring breezes woo them, shy primroses open in the fitful April sunshine, the brown earth is instinct with life, the resurrection lesson is everywhere this Easter morning, when the Catholic Church celebrates the rising of her Lord. We have done our best to learn what Lent could teach us, the pathetic figure of the Master, Jesus, reveals itself to us in new beauty, as striving to understand the meaning that underlies the symbols given, we watched with Him in Gethsemane, knelt beneath the cross at Calvary, and felt our past laid bare by the words that fell from His patient lips, "Father, forgive them, they know not what they do!"

There lies our sole excuse, we did not know what we were doing when we drew close round us the mantle of separateness, speaking the idle word that wounds, indulging in the careless laugh, that sears like a hot iron. We never paused to think of the evil provoked by a scornful rejoinder; vibrations,

that once let loose escape our control, and go forth to do their evil work in the world the Master died to save.

We did not know what we were doing when we deserted truth for superstition, when we accepted symbol for reality, stifling our intelligence, content that our thinking should be done for us, so that we might remain in the apathy of the beaten ways; but now the shadows have lifted, and we stand forth this Easter morning to apply the lesson the crucifixion was designed to teach.

Every deep thinker who declines to receive his religion second hand, is aware that symbol must not be pressed too far, and that the crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension, are not peculiar to the Master of the Western Church, as that Church would have us believe, but are indispensable incidents in the life of every Saviour of mankind, ere he attain to the Christ condition; one of the preliminaries of initiation, figuring the death to earthly lusts in the candidate, the rising to a higher life. The crucifix takes its place with other historical symbols known to science, and can be traced in many ancient sculptures executed thousands of years before the Christian era. Christ Himself is in no way accountable for the superstitions that have gathered round His name. His whole earthly existence was passed in teaching that

Christ is not an individual, but a condition, an overshadowing of the human by the Divine, the taking of the manhood into God, as the Athanasian Creed so admirablyexpresses it; and a condition to be attained by any mortal pure enough to have reunited himself in essence with the All Consciousness.

This is why, in every scripture, the Christ speaks in the name of the Eternal Power He represents, losing in it His human individuality, just as an ambassador at a foreign court is accepted as the mouthpiece of his King. The *Bhagavad Gìtà* represents Krishna as saying: "Come unto Me alone for shelter, sorrow not, I will liberate thee from all sins";* and when Jesus tells us "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life, no man cometh unto the Father but by Me,"† He does not allude to a material mediation, as the Church would have us believe, but to the fact that it is only by developing the Christ Spirit that we shall find God.

When initiate teaching guided the infant Church no such perversion of its Master's meaning was possible; but with the growth of ecclesiastical authority, prejudice crept in, persecution silenced those who knew, and a great temporal power, bloodthirsty, arrogant, reared itself on the foundation of

* 18th Discourse, v. 66, Mrs. Besant's translation.

† *St. John*, xiv. 6.

that tender compassionate Saviour, so truly a man of sorrows, acquainted with grief.

Every mystical utterance of the old Scriptures, symbolical of the upward struggle of the soul, became a biography, the crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension, life incidents, enforced at the point of the sword by the terrors of the Inquisition: the blood sacrifices of the old Dispensation were re-acted in the new, the spiritual signification of the Cross was lost in an anthropomorphic Atonement. Very different is the lesson we gather from this picture of the trials awaiting every human soul. Redemption is the subjection of the carnal to the spiritual, the renunciation of the illusory joys of this material life, the voluntary crucifixion of the self deeply embedded in matter, so that the veil lifts between ourselves and our Creator, and we become "sons made perfect through suffering." There can be, and is, no other means of obtaining the resurrection joy, to which the crucifixion is a prelude.

The Great Master of our church has spoken, and the church has misunderstood and misrepresented Him; in His own words having "ears to hear, let us hear," knowing that thus only our hearts will be attuned to higher vibrations, and through the anguish pictured as Gethsemane shall we step out into the resurrection joy, and His promise be

fulfilled. "I in them, and thou in Me, that they may be made perfect in One."*

I laid down my pen and turned to the garden, where Nature emphasized the Easter lesson in the renewal of myriads of tiny lives. From the heart of my flowers came the glad buzz of the bees. "Spring is reborn," was the burden of their song. The little green sheaths pushing through the earth echoed it, the west wind wooing the daffodils whispered it, and high up in the blue sky a lark trilled rapturously to his mate.

Rejoice! Rejoice!

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* *St. John*, xvii. 23.

Thoughts on the Trinity.

THE beauty of the spring has deepened into summer, its exquisite promise is fulfilled in trees and flowers, the earth is bathed in June sunshine when the Catholic Church celebrates the most mystical of all her Festivals, that of the Holy Trinity.

"I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty."*

The words conjure up that first great mystery of Light the Indian scriptures speak of, shining through the darkness of unmanifestation, giving out from the mighty storehouse of Its own divinity all the future becomings, present as Ideas to Its omniscience, all that was, that is, that is to come. Eternally One, yet separating into Three, as the universe unfolds in obedience to the creative thought: descending as the first outpouring into matter, shaping the atoms which are to become the nucleus of our Solar System. Training, in the second outpouring, the human Monads for their long pilgrimage in the worlds thus prepared; culminating

* *Revelation*, i. 8.

in the third outpouring in the junction of matter and Spirit, so that from the mighty Trinity man comes forth, a human body, a Divine Soul, to use Shrì Krishṇa's words: "A portion of mine own Self, transformed in the world of Life into an immortal Jìva."* This is what the student of occultism reads into the Bible text that conveys so different an idea to the Catholic Church, which has lost the old wisdom teaching; and set up an anthropomorphic Trinity with human relationships, and human sufferings, in place of the three deeply mystical aspects of the One God.

In all religions the Trinity has been worshipped. *Isis Unveiled* gives us this description: "God the Father (the Creator), from whom all things proceed; God the Son (the Wisdom, the Logos and Verbum, the Kabalistic Androgynous Adam Kadmon, Ra in his male aspect, Sephira in his female aspect, for the second Person of the Trinity is always two-fold in manifestation); and from this dual Being proceeds Binah (the Light of Reason), the Holy Ghost of the Christians."†

As Osiris, Isis and Horus, the Egyptians worshipped the Trinity; the Chaldeans as Anu, Ea and Bel; while the early Hindù doctrine gives us Nara, the Father (Heaven), Nari, the Mother

* 15th Discourse, *v.* 7, Mrs. Besant's translation.

† Substance of p. 36, *Isis*, vol. 2, H. P. Blavatsky.

(Earth), Viràj, the Son (Universe). Later Brahma, (the Creator), Vishṇu (the Preserver), Shiva (the Destroyer and Regenerator) dwelling in a burning ground; a symbol replete with signification, for ere regeneration is possible fire must purify the gold—the God that ultimately saves must first destroy.

The metaphysical Hindù mind draws an interesting parallel in the three manifestations of Divinity reflected in the Jàgrat, Svapna, and Sushupti states in man. Thus, the waking consciousness gives us Vaishvànara the cosmic manifestation, third as they point out in evolution, first in involution, the dreaming state Taijasan, or luminous, corresponds with Hiraṇyagarbha the subtle aspect of the divine. In deep sleep the condition of Pràjña, the soul is drawn back into Iṣhvara, the Unmanifested, its beginning and its ending.

In objective life Man also passes through three states of consciousness, swayed by differences, ignorant of the Unity, briefly we may describe them thus :—

1. No recognition of God, the whole consciousness being steeped in pleasure, still developing its vehicles through violent impacts from without.

2. Recognition of God as taught exoterically in most religions. A mighty Power, dealing out

reward and punishment, influenced in some mysterious manner by our sacrifices and supplications ; outside and entirely different to ourselves.

3. Recognition of God as the Unity, separated from us only by the density of our vehicles, the garment of flesh so soon to be laid aside. The universal Àtmà, the One reflected in the Many, "seated in the body of all."

For those on a lower level of development the Trinity will manifest Itself under a simpler aspect, and by the pure heart be realised in the subtle experiences of daily life, for it contains a spiritual meaning that finds an echo in every Son of God, and must become One with Him before the grander conception of the cosmic mystery, the Microcosm in the Macrocosm can be grasped.

We stand on the summit of a mountain and feast our eyes on the glorious panorama of one of those sunsets which alone convey to non-clairvoyant eyes the purity of astral colouring, in their infinite gradations of tender amber, rose, and blue. Or some night we witness a storm at sea, above the howling of the wind, thunder claps resound, the play of the lightning reveals gigantic waves lashed into fury, dashing themselves in clouds of spray against the rock-bound coast: and in the awe that falls on us, the sense of our own nothingness before peace and storm alike, our consciousness expands,

and through these, His messengers, God the Father speaks.

Another time the sweetness of life appeals more forcibly to us; the radiant sunshine, the irresponsible gladness of youth, beautiful and evanescent as the down on a butterfly's wing. Love, rose-crowned, comes to us, and, as we gather him in our arms, new strength is born of that sweet contact, our heart goes out to the Lord of all Love, and God the Son stands revealed in the depths sounded by a passion so absorbing, it needs must find its ultimate fulfilment in the Divine. Every Christ has been the answer to this cry from man for God's love, crystallised in His own image.

Then there are moments when neither as Power or Love, is the Godhead present with us; when words seem irreverent, symbol but a futile grasping after what cannot be understood, and everything for a while is darkness. Then, on the weary mind, a deep peace falls, intellectual difficulties fade away, and out of the silence, God the Holy Ghost descends, a pure Essence, unmanifested, impalpable, yet most surely felt; and we fall in adoration before the Trinity in Unity, revealed in those three human aspects of the One God.

"Three in One, and One in three,
Dimly here we worship Thee;
With the Saints hereafter we
Hope to bear the palm."

St. Paul instructs his converts to regard themselves as body, soul (or, as we should say, mind), and spirit.*

Body, the vehicle formed and perfected through many cycles for the evolution of the soul. Immersed at first in materiality, keenly responsive to lower astral vibrations, blind and deaf to those that do not point to some immediate gratification, surely a sorry instrument with which to rise, and yet the only one at the disposal of the soul. Well may the journey be described as long, the climbing arduous, ere the body is subdued, the warfare in its rebellious members over, and the Master steps forth from the ordeal, a Son of God made perfect through suffering.

Mind, the controlling power, the potter's hand that is to fashion the human clay, the instrument that too often mars where it should have made; brooding over objects of the senses till it invests them with the glamour of a higher sphere, and a temptation that in its gross form would have had no power to attract, becomes irresistible where Manas has drawn it on to the flower-decked plane of illusion, and given it back so transfigured that bewildered humanity accepts the vice as virtue, the lie as a revelation of divine truth.

Spirit, the ever present Àtmà, God's impress that neither body or mind can efface, however far they

* 1st *Thessalonians*, v. 23.

wander from it. The brooding presence that can wait through innumerable lives, through Manvantara and Pralàya, till the union between body, soul and spirit is effected, and the Trinity in man is gathered into the Trinity in God.

Only as we draw this fulness into ourselves shall we rise to the consciousness of the magnificent possibilities before us, the joy of the triumphant soul that realises itself as the Alpha and Omega, "He that is, that was, and is to come, the Almighty."

Thoughts from the Sea.

HAVE you ever, when pressed by the din and turmoil of life,—in the grip, perhaps, of a sorrow only time can alleviate,—turned your back on would-be sympathisers and taken your trouble straight to the sea? Have you known the solace of feeling the water close round you, realised your own powerlessness as you floated idly on its mighty surface, known that in some mysterious way you were one with it, that it was part of you, that you adored it for its majesty and power, stretched out your arms and besought it to permeate your being, wash away the earth stains, bring you into the atmosphere of its own purity? If none of these experiences have been yours, the Frenchman's wise saying applies to you; "*que de fois on passe dans la vie à côté de ce qu'en ferait le charme!*" You have missed one of the great anodynes of life.

Beautiful, ever changing ocean, only those on whom this mystic spell is cast can realise thy charm! Terrible in wrath, lulling to profoundest peace when every silver ripple whispers just the message our heart longs for, as it breaks into laughter at our feet ere drawn back to its play-

fellows with that murmur in which lurks the essence of all lullabies. Oh, mother of many moods, what adjective that was ever coined, what poem that was ever phrased, shall even dimly hymn thine infinite perfection!

Is it because we are island born that this unquiet immensity of water responds to a need in us that is touched by nothing else? A faithful mirror of life, it seems to me, gazing with fascinated eyes into its blue depths; on which we are tossed helpless as those strands of purple seaweed, the sport of wind and weather. Yet purposeless as it all appears, order underlies the seeming chaos; the tide rises and falls in obedience to fixed rules. The storm-tossed life throbs joyfully to vibrations started many a year ago, gathers sorrowfully bitter fruit from the same past, and when it comes to the knowledge that this is so, is content that the debt should be paid, that the waves should gather and break, so that the sooner they bear the soul to peace. Peace, that solitude into which no sympathy can enter, no love, however deep, can penetrate; for where human passion intrudes, even in its most rarefied form, it brings with it inevitably the element of unrest. The peace of which the ocean murmurs to me, only dawns on the one who, realising himself as part of the divine Whole, casts away the mantle of separateness; and, gather-

ing all things into himself, transmutes them into harmony, so that, indeed, "the peace of God which passes all understanding" descends as the Great All Consciousness lifts such a soul nearer to itself.

To-day the west wind has lashed the sea into a mimic fury, on the horizon the beautiful indigo depths are barely flecked with white, but near the shore large waves are tumbling over each other in angry protest at the upward slant of the beach, and the snowy foam in prodigal profusion throws its creamy treasures high up on the greedy sand. The triumphal music of the breeze as it sports with the incoming rush of troubled water, bears to me with it (for I had been studying that most engrossing book, Râma Prâsad's *Nature's Finer Forces*, and am indebted to it for these ideas) a vision of the Tattvas, those five primary manifestations of the Great Breath, that in obedience to the creative thought, assuming more definite properties as they descended through the spheres, brought our world into objectivity.

Æon after Æon passed while Àkàsha,—Gas, Fire, Water, Earth—fulfilled their appointed tasks, how fascinating in thought to dwell on it, to picture the dim outline of the seven luminous globes that are to be the future habitation of man; to watch the fire mists gather, the immature worlds

shattered and reformed as the Tattvas swept on their relentless way, agents of Shiva the Creator and Destroyer, then as now. The world work complete, that no link between the human and divine should remain unforged, the same great Cosmic Powers incorporated themselves into the body of man. Àkàsha crowned the head and brain that were to grow god-like. Vàyu between throat and eyebrows lingered, so that the third eye hidden there preserves the memory of the divine. Fire descended on the heart, and life pulsated, touched the tongue, and speech was born. Water from middle to knee linked him with itself and with the Astral plane. Earth claimed his feet, and rooted them to it, each Tattva imposed its own colour and correspondence, under them the wonderful network of veins and nerves sprang into being. Guided by Sun and Moon the great Breath divided into negative and positive; from the brain the Solar current poured its vivifying influence throughout the body; the positive force in Nature, the power of the Moon gathered in the heart, and sends out from thence the cooler negative current. Pràṇa, the atmosphere round the Sun, in which the Earth and all Planets move, the sustainer of everything that is, differentiates itself into the human breath: and the two canals, Ìdà and Pingalà, of the spinal cord Sushumnà, distributes this life force through

the Nàḍis and Chakras, following again the five-fold Tattvic manifestations. As Pràṇa the life breath animates the whole body, its correspondence in the macrocosm being the Sun. Apàna, that which throws off waste, is connected with the Earth; Samàna, the digestive breath, is helped by Àkàsha; Vyana, the circulating breath, keeping the body in physical efficiency, is dominated by Vàyu. Udàna, the power which impels the life current back to the centres heart and brain, and is, therefore, associated with death, is controlled by Tejas, the luminous ether, the fire that quenching physical life leads the emancipated Ego to super-physical existence.

Always positive and negative run side by side, the former strongest from day to night has by then so dominated the body that it sinks into the unconsciousness we call sleep, which would pass into death did not the cooler lunar current set in when the heart is reached and counteract it, till in its turn its effect exhausted, and the brain-power re-established, we awake. A perfect balance between these great forces is imperative, as if the strength of either passed beyond the ordinary limits, death ensues; that is why the passage from the body is sometimes alluded to as being solar or lunar, according to the current which has asserted its ascendency.

Nature's mighty work completed, man comes forth a perfect organism ready, had harmony prevailed, to subdue all things to himself; but, alas! the Tattvic colours intermingled, each Cosmic Power, claimed this new-born being as its own, and the endless strife between Spirit and Matter began. Man identifying himself with these warring elements sank deeper and deeper into fleshly lust; mind as it developed co-operating with body, made the captivity complete. The perishable vehicles that responded so readily to pain and pleasure, constituted himself, the Divine, from having been a part of his consciousness became an outside potency, to be feared and propitiated; opposed to his instincts, hostile to all that interested him most. Yet properly understood the Tattvic forces in macrocosmic, and microcosmic, developments establish the unity as nothing else can. The Hindù scriptures teach that God and man function and enjoy through seven metaphorical members and nineteen mouths, the latter consisting of the five senses, the five organs of action, hands, feet, tongue, the organs of excretion and generation. The five breaths, Pràṇa, Apàna, Samàna, Vyàna, Udàna, already described, Buḍḍhi Manas, Chiṭṭa and Ahaṃkàra. Into all these modes of progress the great Cosmic life infuses itself, that it may lead on the evolution of the child soul that for so long

can only be appealed to from outside. The word enjoyment at first sight appears misleading when applied to the Divine, but it is not so; for in these manifestations that make up the sum of human sensations, Iṣhvara has willed to limit Himself, that every passion which plunges man deeper into separateness should be instinct with His life, held together only by that great force, so that however far humanity seems to wander from Him, in very truth they still live, move, and have their being in Him alone, He who not only is the ending but the beginning, "dwelling in the world, enveloping all."*

Looking out again across the blue plain of waters, watching the silver of a seagull's wing cleave the waves, man in his unrest sinks out of sight; and following the bird as it soars heavenward, a gleam of light poised between sea and sky, in thought I would fain resolve the mighty Tattvic forces into the limitless space that is the womb of all things, past, present, and to come.

Immensity, to which the ears are dedicated as receptacles of sound, which it conveys, dimly grasped by sight and touch, which, reaching forward to attain some object of desire, and, failing to do so, recognise as space that which separates them from it. Around us everywhere, responsive

* *Bhagavad Gîtâ*, 13th Discourse, *v.* 13.

to our passionate yearning for freedom, yet far above human cognition, for how can the finite expand to the infinite, mortal measure immortality? When we have explored the wonders space unfolds as far as science takes us, the great plenum that is a vacuum only to the ignorant, there comes a moment when alone the mystic realises a shadow of the Great Beyond, the "thrice Greatest Darkness where all knowledge is resolved into ignorance," where prostrate the soul must lie one with the restful night till light dawns, for light there is behind the veil, so dazzling that alone the ecstatic vision may picture it. The light of the central Sun, which could it pierce for one moment the outer robes that shade its glory would destroy the Universe it maintains. A splendour to which all human conception of radiance is darkest night, and from the centre of this Light, which is nowhere, to the circumference which is everywhere, proceeds the outbreathing and the inbreathing which is Manvantara and Pralayà, the giving forth the Life of our Solar Logos, and the withdrawal of all things into Himself.

Yet when this almost unapproachable height is realised, space still remains, supporting other Solar systems, working out other laws we are ignorant of, the reflection of the unknowable, the veil of Parabrahman Itself.

Holy, holy, holy, surely the rhythm of the waves

are chanting it: and like a chord of music Shrì Kṛishṇa's words float back from the far-off past, "Having pervaded this whole Universe with a portion of Myself, I remain."*

* *Bhagavad Gìtà*, Mrs. Besant's translation, 9th Discourse, *v.* 42.

The Descent of Spirit.

IT is with a considerable feeling of awe that I approach a subject so fraught with mystery as the different aspects of Godhead. The knowledge of It is only possible when the power of Àṭmà quickens, and great care must be exercised to avoid the error of exoteric faiths, and refrain from picturing in vision, however transcendent, what is altogether Arupa and beyond sight. For the descent of Spirit cannot be imaged, not even as Light can that great "Light of all Lights" be present to the mind; as pure essence It hovers round us drawing to It that which is akin in us to Itself, and every sense is stilled in the Holy Presence that is beyond all sight, all touch, and all sound.

Necessarily any statements made on such a subject must be brief, one's own puny mind dare not speculate on it: reverently we recall what those who possessed illumination have recorded for our benefit, and try by grouping the rare facts we possess to make our own thinking a little clearer on matters so vital to our spiritual welfare, for of what avail is knowledge without the effort on our part to understand? Always throughout my own

study that searching text in the *Amritabindù Upanishat* is before me. "Veiled in word illusion never goeth one by darkness to the Holy Place, and when darkness is dispelled the One alone sees the Unity."

* * * *

Contemplating the Cosmos according to that great occultist Subba Row's enumeration we have to deal with a quarternary beginning with Parabrahman, the One Power underlying cosmic activity in Whom the germ of all universes eternally exists; put forth during Manvantara, withdrawn into Himself in Pralaya, inconceivable, as no qualities cognisable by man exist in the vast isolation in which He energises. From Him proceeds the mystery only second to Himself; the Great Cosmic Logos Who represents to us all that can be conceived of Parabrahman. Emerging from the night of non-being, clothed with the power that is to evolve all worlds, no human comprehension can even dimly image His infinite perfection; it is by negation the sacred writings themselves endeavour to raise us to those heights. "The man," they tell us, "thinks best on Him for whom He passeth thought," and again, "Speech falls back, not reaching Him, and mind as well."

Second in this creative Trinity is Mùlaprakrti or Avyaktam, the undifferentiated root of matter

existing as space from all eternity; appearing from the objective point of view of the Logos as the veil thrown over Parabrahman. (*Lectures on Gìtà*, by S. Row, p. 22.)

It is the source from which springs all differentiated matter as later we see it, forming the basis of our world. Devoid of attributes in its unrevealed aspect, as it draws round it the qualities that enslave the soul it appears as the root of evil, the opponent of Spirit, the burden of desire that fetters with illusive chains Àtmà Itself.

Thirdly there is Ḍaiviprakṛti, the Light of the Logos, the One creative energy that brings the whole Cosmos with its millions of Solar Systems into existence "and is the link, so to speak, between objective matter and the subjective thought of Iṣhvara. It is called in several Buḍḍhist books Fohât, It is the one instrument with which the Logos works." (*Ibid.*, page 27.) So we may think of It as the vital spark in every energy, cosmic or human, manifesting as It descends as Will, Wisdom, and Power, and above and beyond all It is pure Spirit, the second of the eternal pair of opposites, ever working towards perfection in the evolution of worlds and of man.

Turning from these great principles common to the whole Cosmos we will try to trace the manner in which they permeate our own Solar System and

later becoming incorporated into the human body constitute the link that makes us One with Brahman.

As Vaishvànara the Creative Power manifests, matter shaping itself into the possibilities of expressing life, as in its grosser form it evolves worlds; so in its subtlest form it becomes the basis on superphysical planes of the vehicles in which the Hiraṇyagarbha and Sùṭràṭmà work, and without which those great principles must have remained undifferentiated from the One Existence whence they spring. "Hiraṇyagarbha is the basis of the Astral light but not to be confounded with it, bearing the same relation to it as Vaishvànara does to the objective world." (*Ibid.*, page 31.) In another aspect Hiraṇyagarbha becomes the Sùṭràṭmà; and it is these different facets of that One Light as expressed in the human kingdom, the student should strive to put clearly before him.

I do not wish the words human kingdom to convey any limitation; we know that the divine life is everywhere, mounting upwards in the quickening seed, pulsating in the axes of the crystal, that all creation is held together solely by Its presence and omnipotence; but I would specially designate the points where It overshadows man in this short study.

Hiraṇyagarbha is spoken of more than once in the Scriptures as "the first," the primary ray

thrown on darkness, the Light we are considering. In our world It is, as the meaning of the word implies, the golden womb of divine consciousness in which the Monad exists and grows. Also It is that aspect of the Logos which as the evolution of man proceeds, becoming differentiated, forms the individual Ego, and presents Itself to every separate intelligence as the I apart from all other I's, constituting the self-consciousness we speak of as Ahaṃkàra; the vehicle with which man contacts matter and in which the Pratyàgàtmà first enters Saṃsàra. The exact manner in which this Light manifesting either as the Hiraṇyagarbha or Sùtràtmà descends through our own Solar Logos is a mystery we cannot fathom.

That It does so descend is undoubted, intermingling with His Life, transmitted by Him to His system; and yet, though the very essence of His Being, remaining Itself a direct emanation from the Most High, able to lift the soul that recognises this beyond the unimaginable glory of the Solar Logos into Brahman Himself. And so those possessed of occult knowledge no longer worship the Sun, it is the outward expression of the Ruler of our System, the Author to us of all good things; but we dare not risk losing sight of the Supreme Who stands behind this splendour, the Mighty One Who is also ourselves. The Gàyatri has a mystical signification

beyond the apparent meaning of the words, and represents an absorption of the worshipper in Brahman that is in perfect harmony with occult truth.

To turn to the second division of our subject, the Sùṭràṭmà we are informed is in Its highest signification, the eternal germ of the manifested universe existing in Mùlaprakṛṭi. Descending through the Æons into our world, It is the individual consciousness of the Monad growing within the golden womb of Light, differentiating Itself into the Kàraṇa Sharìra, a centre of pràjña or seed of consciousness which stores the individuality which runs through the Monad's many incarnations; the thread soul. The Annamaya, the Pràṇamaya, the Manomaya, the Ananḍamaya Koshas constitute the physical veil of the Sùṭràṭmà, as they permeate the body manifesting Àṭmà as the Creator and enjoyer of all sense objects, till in the words of Scripture: "As the silkworm spinning its cocoon on every side shuts itself in by self-made threads, even so Àṭmà, though It transcends all attributes, invests Itself on every side with attributes and thus deprives Itself of freedom."*

The emancipation of the mind from this self-illusion, the identifying ourselves with this pure and passionless Àṭmà that only seems to act in

* Mahàbhàrata division, Book of Freedom, ccciv.

the unrest of the body, remaining ever in reality the disinterested Witness of its follies, this is the aim of evolution; the reason for the connection between ourselves and these manifestations of divine Life. The sheaths which on the objective side limit our consciousness while in the body, and on the subjective side deal with super-physical planes; are swayed by the two aspects of Deity we are considering so closely interwoven that the attempt to disentangle them, to make our thinking clear, is hopeless, till we remember that whether energising as Hiraṇyagarbha or the Sūṭràṭmà, the One Light is the informing principle; and every ray It puts forth must partake of the nature of Its parent source. And as the divine rays meet and interpenetrate, so do the human bodies whose tabernacle they are, join in mystical union with the higher principles which receive the outpouring from above. "Thou art Myself, My image and My shadow, I have clothed Myself in thee."* As in a vision we see the Holy Flame descend, enveloping the brain that is to grow God-like, entering Sushumnà that vitality may suffuse every nerve and vein, then, because humanity must run its own course, learn its own lesson, at the base of Sushumnà Kundalini sleeps, sleeps till Puruṣha wakes, till the power of Yoga bids it arise,

* *Secret Doctrine, Stanzas of Dzyan* 7, *v.* 7, H. P. Blavatsky.

and the Flame leaps forth to meet the universal Fire, Fohat, Messenger of the Great Light.

Thus we realise the triumphant saying of the Vedas

"Tat tvam asi"
That thou art.

Meditations.

Preliminary.

WE are all familiar with the beautiful sentence that sums up meditation as "the inexpressible yearning of the inner man to go out towards the Infinite," and the method to be practised to attain this realisation is given us in the Taittirîya Upanishat in these words: "To approach a thing viewing it as something else as taught in the scriptures, and there to dwell long till they come (devotee and subject) to be regarded as one constitutes what is called Upàsana."

The initial difficulties are many, but they are considerably enhanced by those who think it necessary to assume fantastic Eastern postures to annoy the body, which should be quiescent, if it is to be successfully ignored. In some forms of Hatha Yoga for the development of psychic faculties no doubt these practices have a certain importance; but in Ràjà Yoga the aim is to quicken spiritual perception, and every discomfort that draws attention to the body is undesirable. All that is necessary is to sit erect, the eyes closed, that the attention may not be distracted, the hands and feet touching

each other to prevent the escape of magnetism, the muscles relaxed. Left thus to itself the body will fall into subservience, the beating of the heart slow down, the breath, as in a sleeping infant, become almost imperceptible as the life force concentrates in the brain centres. Great care should be taken to select an hour and place where no interruption need be feared, for in successful meditation the consciousness functioning in higher vehicles leaves the body, and if recalled to it by a sudden shock very serious physical consequences may accrue. A tension of the muscles in an involuntary effort to follow the concentration of the mind will often be experienced; this is easily overcome by relaxing them when the sensation is observed. The mind is less easily dealt with and we become aware of the peculiarity it possesses of following two distinct lines of thought, the one we are engaged in and another trivial one to which we refuse the consent of the will. No notice should be taken of this, by degrees as meditation deepens the annoyance will cease, and should not be allowed to discourage beginners. It is because the mind is fresher directly after waking and still under the influence of teaching we have received out of the body; that so much stress is laid on early morning meditation. Of course it should not be neglected later in a day thus well begun, and a room set aside for this purpose, filled

with objects that inspire the heart with devotion, will be found of great assistance. As far as is possible every care should be left at the threshold that it may carry out its purpose, and be a veritable place of peace; only attracting vibrations of the highest type, that should pass through the disciple and radiate out in love on all around him. For the blessing of the Holy Ones which attends meditation in a sanctuary thus set apart is not for the separated self; "until a man has become in heart and spirit a disciple, he has no existence for those who are teachers of disciples"* We cannot impress this great truth too often on ourselves, just in proportion as we are willing to give we shall receive, and be privileged to go forth into the world as channels of divine grace. In these pages devoted to the consideration of Ràja Yoga I am going to set down some of the lessons the great Masters of Wisdom have left for our instruction, arranging them in the form of meditations, that thus we may assimilate them better and strive to follow where They lead. As much as possible I have quoted Their words, only adding what is necessary to link scattered sentences together into a harmonious whole. So often the heart yearns to grasp the Unity and does not know how to realise it, thoughts such as these woven into the brain in

* Comments. *Light on the Path* 4. M. Collins.

meditation bring it home as nothing else can; may they prove as helpful to others as I have found them in my own spiritual life.

For the benefit of those, on purely Christian lines I would add one word as to the phraseology used by the great Eastern Mystics. Brahman is the word with which they replace the Western appellation God; but the Oriental mind probes deeper than the European's, and ascribes to Deity attributes the Catholic Church has not so far realised. A study of the methods they use to impress the Eternal Spirit on the hearts of His worshippers, can only deepen Christian reverence, reminding it that though faiths and outward observances, like the names given to the Supreme, are many, yet above them all, in unapproachable Glory, He reigns omnipotent, the Same as the Bible tells us, "yesterday, to-day, and for ever."*

Preparatory Meditation.

This race is never taught, but when He wills, its memory is restored by God.

* * * *

In these words Hermes Trismegistus† points out a great truth, the realisation of which must be

* *Hebrews*, xiii. 8.

† *Thrice-Greatest Hermes*, by G. R. S. Mead, 3 vols., London, 1906. *Corpus Hermeticum*, xiii., p. 221.

our preparation for meditation, and this truth is that everything, the knowledge, the qualities we hope to develop from Yoga, exist in ourselves, are present in us as states of consciousness before they cross the threshold of the mind; that the countless lives lying behind us contain the germ of every capacity we are striving to evolve. No new teaching is necessary for us to enter into our inheritance, only a gradual awakening of the forces within us, an unfoldiug of the whole being to the Sun of truth. In the forgotten past astral sight was ours, as it will be in the future, nay, more, in the days of our innocency we knew ourselves as part of the great Whole, a ray put forth by the Creator, His Will was our will, no shadow of separation had arisen. As matter densified, drawing into itself the attractions and repulsions that constitute separation, and man entered into that physical body which is the tomb of the soul; this divine memory left him, retreating into the Kàraṇa Sharìra, the subtle principle which keeps alive every power of the Spirit, the spark ever seeking reunion with the flame that put it forth.

Again Hermes tells us, "If then thou learnest that thou art thyself of Life and Light, and that thou only happen'st to be out of them, thou shalt return again to life."*

* *Hermes*, Vol. II., pp. 13-14, *v.* 21.

In response to the agonised enquiry of the disciple, "How shall I come to Life again?" the thrice greatest One traces how as Mind, He overshadows the evolving soul, inspiring it, warding off the insidious approach of wickedness: "As door-keeper closing up the entrances, and cutting the mental actions off which base and evil energies induce."*

So that ere life closes, the man whose eyes have thus been opened, turns in disgust from the slavery brought about by sensations of the body; which, plunging him ever deeper into the gross matter that alone vibrates to fleshly lusts, holds him bound in the forgetfulness which is the cause of all human woe.

All such limitations are, however, self-imposed, for to the knowledge Hermes promises, if sought with clean hands and a purified heart, meditation will re-admit us: for only as we pass from one state of consciousness to those above it, can body be transcended, the mist clear that veils the eyes of Spirit and our memory be restored by God.

Meditation on Thought Control.

Yoga is the suppression of the transformations of the thinking principle.†

* * * *

In these words Patanjali, the great Master of Yoga, sets the means to this end clearly before

* *Ibid.*, *v.* 22. † *Yoga Sutra* 2.—Patanjali.

us. The lower mind, which in its normal state flits from topic to topic, dwelling seriously on none, must become one pointed, subject to the will; thus only does the Self regain possession of its vehicle, and open out the consiousness, these wandering thoughts obscure. Every power is present in the Self which in its essence is Brahman, nothing can be added to it, nothing taken from it; but only such portion of it as the body reflects can illuminate each life, and while the mind identifies itself with the body and seeks only worldly gratifications, the light is obscured; and Karma forges new fetters to bind us to the wheel of birth and death.

It is the density of the matter of this plane which makes the transmission of higher vibrations so difficult. What we call an emotion is only the comparatively small fragment of one which remains, after the majority of it has been exhausted in setting in motion the clumsy physical particles; therefore higher vibrations are necessarily weakened before they reach the objective brain. It is the man, conditioned by this matter, with its illusion of Time and Space, who believes himself to be ignorant, subject to physical laws, unable to rise above them; till Death relieves him of the earthly form which he has allowed to fetter the might of Spirit. It is to rid him of this delusion, to render possible the freer passage of the overshadowing

soul, that the system of Yoga was designed, for in the tranquility imposed on mind and body, subtler forces can manifest; and vibrations reach the brain at rest that would be impossible in the hurry and turmoil of the world.

The certainty of this power within us all is what we must cling to through every difficulty that besets our realisation of it, for we know the path we are entering, the road to recollection, is sharp as a razor's blade, and leads through a solitude from which humanity shrinks appalled.

Yet this condition is one of pure illusion, the Christ gave us this assurance when He told His disciples, "Behold, the hour cometh that ye shall be scattered, and shall leave Me alone; and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with Me."*

And in the Egyptian Gospel of Eve we have this fragment:

"I stood on a lofty mountain, and saw a gigantic Man and another, a dwarf; and I heard as it were, a voice of thunder, and drew nigh for to hear; and He spake unto me and said: 'I am thou, and thou art I; and wheresoever thou mayest be, I am there. In all am I scattered, and whencesoever thou willest, thou gatherest Me; and gathering Me, thou gatherest Thyself.'"†

* *St. John*, xvi. 32.

† *Hermes*, Vol. II., p. 24. G. R. S. Mead.

For this reason meditation, which is the beginning of Yoga, has been enjoined by all great religious teachers, that thereby the mind may be disciplined and turned from the outgoing path of desire, to the incoming road of peace. For what a man thinks of that he becomes; the mind that dwells on the glory of the Self will reflect it as surely as it has reflected worldly lusts, nay, more so, for one is temporal, the other is eternal, one the Màyà of darkness, the other the Light in which dwells the great Self of all. So undaunted by its difficulty we take up this inhibition of the principles of the mind set before us by Patanjali. Every time, and they are countless, it is diverted from the task selected, we draw it back to the exact point at which attention wandered, and recommence the arduous discipline. Shrì Krishṇa's words are there to encourage us, to point the way to attainment. How, Arjuna asks him, is this mastery to be obtained? "for Manas is verily restless, it is impetuous, strong, and difficult to bend; I deem it as hard to curb as the wind."

And the Master answers: "Without doubt Manas is hard to curb and restless; but it may be curbed by constant practice and by indifference.

"Yoga is hard to attain by a self that is uncontrolled, but by the self-controlled it is attainable by properly directed energy."*

* *Bhagavad Gìtà*, 6th Discourse, *v.* 34-35, Mrs. Besant.

The gradual withdrawal of our interest from sense objects, whence perception dawns that mind is not ourselves, but only an instrument to be used as our will directs, vibrations that were wont to shatter us attuned to harmony, these things will come to us even at the beginning of Yoga. And the end of it? Ah, who can picture with earth-bound senses the rapture of Unity realised, no longer faith but knowledge; the lifting of every veil that hides from our dazzled eyes the Mount of Transfiguration, where reborn, reclothed in a robe of glory, our purified souls gaze on the Self in its fulness, One with the Self of all, and are satisfied.

Meditation on the Unity.

Identify the mind and senses with the Puruṣha so that all is seen as if blended in One, the sense of being.

* * * *

THESE words open out to us a class of meditation we are apt to overlook in favour of a purely intellectual exercise; yet which is essential to the realisation of the Self. With all our brain power we strive to grasp truth, but our attitude is more positive than receptive, and therefore consciousness of the Unity does not draw us into Its supreme peace. That is why we are taught to picture the Master in the heart chakram, and send out from it

and not from the brain, all the devotion of which we are capable, and Shrì S'ankaràchàrya tells us that though no doubt Buddhi is everywhere, still the heart is its special dwelling-place. The attitude of enquiry is perfectly legitimate and necessary to progress, the turning of the search-light of intellect on every problem presented to it; but no less indispensable is the passive condition, when the mind is emptied of thought, and prostrate in the Divine Presence awaits the outpouring from above.

It is very difficult to practice, and for long will elude us, for we have to be at the same time positive where lower vibrations are concerned, and receptive to those coming from a higher plane, but if Buddhi is to overshadow us the lesson must be learnt, though we shall only acquire it perfectly at the Teacher's feet, as He clears away the mists in which we struggle during our years of probation. But much arduous endeavour lies before us ere this privilege will be ours; for we are expected to prepare the foundations on which He will rear the perfect edifice, work out our own salvation before we are received as disciples by these Helpers of the World.

We must never lose sight of the fact that this higher form of devotion is not an intellectual effort, or an outcome of the powers of mind, but a

laying aside of thought, an abandoning the separated consciousness before the Eternal Consciousness that is in all; no longer reaching forth to know Him, but abiding in an infinite peace to receive Him, and though it be long delayed, the answer to this when it comes, is ecstacy.

When considering the "sense of being" that is our subject, kneeling, let the all-pervading Life encompass you, absorb you, till another state is realised in which the old land-marks are gone. Think of yourself as quite apart from the body, as abandoning it with all its physical weaknesses and endless limitations, and watching the essence rise from it as you have seen incense go straight up when burnt in sacrifice to the Lord.

Let your whole being rise with it, conscious of no separation, no individuality; let it pass with the fragrance of the offering, free from all earthly taint, and lose itself in the great source of all light and life.

Meditation on the Pranava.

No beautiful verse of scripture appealing at once to the imagination is here offered for our consideration. A comprehension of the method in which higher forces reflect themselves in man involves much hard thinking; but it is an indis-

pensable groundwork through which will filter our first perception of the Unity, to be strengthened when later we pass to a more mystical interpretation of the Aum. Each letter has its own significance and traces the correspondences that establish our identity with that One Life present as the Jìva and Brahman.

"The S'ruti declares the impossibility of the existence of anything apart from verbal expression for it says: 'All this is of It, held together by the string of speech, and the cord of specific names.' The whole universe of experience is described by names; even the highest Brahman is thus realised and is the Aum."*

The *Màṇḍùkya Upaniṣhaṭ*, which is concerned entirely with the Praṇava, tells us: "Om, the word which never dies. What was, what is, what will be, all is but Oṃ; what else besides which triple time transcends, that too is Om."†

A.

Esoteric science claims that the vowel A is the first great sound in nature, taking precedence of all others. In man, the microcosm, it is reflected in the Jàgraṭ or waking state, the field of human consciousness; in Brahman, the macrocosm, as

* Shrì S'aṅkarà's *Commentary on Màṇḍùkya*, p. 4.

† *Màṇḍùkya Upaniṣhaṭ*, trans. by Mead and Chaṭṭopàdhyàyo, *v.* 1.

Vaishvànara; the mighty activity that stands behind the creation of all worlds furnishing the impetus that brings them into being. In this objective condition we are told that both God and man function and enjoy with seven metaphorical senses and nineteen mouths, the first consist of

The crown of the head, symbolising supercelestial spheres.

The eyes, which are the sun and moon.

The ears, which are space.

The mouth, which is fire.

The lungs, which are atmosphere.

The stomach, linking man to the astral region of desire, planes just above the physical.

The feet, symbolising the earth and its attraction.

The nineteen mouths are:

The five Jñànendṛiyas, knowledgegiving-senses, hearing, feeling, sight, taste, smell.

The five Karmendṛiyas, organs of action, speech, hands, feet.

The organ of excretion.

The organ of generation.

The five vital breaths or nerve currents.

Pràṇa, the life breath.

Apàna, the downward breath, that which has to do with waste.

Sàmana, the digestive force.

Vyàna, the all-pervading breath.

Udàna, the power that impels life back to the centres, and terminates physical existence.

Manas, Buḍḍhi, Chiṭṭa and Ahaṃkàra.*

Each of these conditions must be taken in succession and most carefully thought out; the manner in which we use the senses, the point where they emerge from nature and become instruments of Àtman standing above all these manifestations of His consciousness, poured down into bodies shaped to receive them. The letter A endlessly pulsating, the putting forth, the reflecting itself in sentient life. "Everywhere That has hands and feet, everywhere eyes, heads, and mouths, all-hearing It dwelleth in the world enveloping all."†

U.

The letter U deals with the second, the subjective state of man, the Svapna or dreaming consciousness, the Taijasan or luminous condition of the divine.

In the dream state Àṭmà is seen diffused in the mind, and the dreamer apparently incapable of grasping any abstract idea unrelated to himself, creates a world of his own, in which he is subject to no law save that of the imagination. He surrounds himself with incoherent images, as the

* *Vedic Philosophy*, Har Nàryàna, pp. 87-88.

† *Bhagavad Gìtà*, 13th Discourse, *v.* 13, Mrs. Besant.

mechanism of the brain repeats automatically the vibrations imposed on it. Etheric matter also assists in transmitting these impressions; and as any change in circulation, or the nerve currents affect these delicate organs and prevent their harmonious action, dreams generally present themselves with the lack of continuation, and the blurred outlines with which we are all familiar. But beyond the confusion of this dim stirring of physical and etheric brain, is a wider consciousness, functioning on a higher plane, whose subtle matter responds instantly in light and colour to the thinker's vision; surrounding him with a glorified realisation of the thought.

We may think of this astral body into which man steps when deep sleep or death has loosed him from the physical sheath, and note in that subtler realm of illusion the Ahaṃkàra and its Màyà that was so sore a fetter in this life. There the sleeping Ego creates for himself phantasies innumerable; there, when the body has been definitely abandoned, the memory of its appetites still hang round and impede the liberated soul. The world of effects, not of causes, the middle state, the letter U, only to be prepared for in this life, while the divine A bids us be up and doing, ere the night falls in which no man can work.

M.

"The third part, the Upaniṣhaṭ tells us, is Pràjña, whose sphere is the condition of sleep When memory is at rest, the Seer is, as it were, unified with the Pràjña in the Àkàsha of the heart, and becomes 'a mass all ṣentiency.' The function of the mind having ceased, and cognition and memory, the acts of the mind, being at rest, Pràṇa is indistinguishably concentrated in the heart, and draws all within."*

As in repeating the Praṇava the letters A and U merge in sound into the M, so in deep sleep Vishvànara and Taijasa lose themselves in Pràjña, which is beyond both, absorbing physical and astral activity into the condition of supreme bliss. Therefore M is the final letter of the divine and human Trinity, Sushupṭi or deep sleep in man, on subtler planes, the Sutràtman, the divine Principle that eventually withdraws all things into Itself. Every life inevitably must pass to the rest of dreamless slumber if the efficiency of the body is to be maintained, and into the deeper rest of the heavenly world if the soul is to assimilate, ere it takes to itself a new tabernacle, the experiences of its past life. In either case we know the vital principle is drawn back through the intricate network of

* Shrì Sankarà on *Màṇḍùkya Upaniṣhaṭ.*

nerves and veins, into the Great Consciousness that put it forth and holds it in suspension till the coming of the new day; for Jàgrat with its toils and pleasures must pass into Svapna, Svapna and its delusions be swallowed up in the peace of Sushupti, as the vibration of the Aum ceases with the closing of the lips on the final M.

When the three Mâtras of the Praṇava have been thus realised, there still remains the fourth stage of Ṭuriyà, which the Vedàntins have translated as the state of Be-ness, the Trinity in Unity, the attributes transcended and drawn back into the source whence they sprung. More will be said on this condition in a later meditation on the Praṇava, which deals less with its human, more with its mystical aspect. For the moment it is sufficient to outline the Ṭuriyà as the culmination of all that precedes it, the fulfilment of divine purpose which we have watched gradually unfold itself in the vibration of every letter that reaches completion in the sacred word

AUM.

Meditation on the Five Koshas or Sheaths.

THESE are the Annamaya or the one composed of food, the Prànamaya, composed of vitality, the Manomaya, composed of thought, the Vijnànamaya,

composed of intelligence and the Anàndamaya, composed of bliss. In these the Self manifests as the Ego. "Man naturally identifies himself with the body, by constant contemplation of the Koshas, thinking of them not only as his physical vehicles but as altars of sacred fire, the student acquires wisdom. With this discrimination he abandons one Kosha after another till all being dissolved he attains the knowledge of his unity with Brahman, and thus reaches liberation."

* * * *

The Manomaya and Vijnànamaya Koshas in the classification presented above by Shrì S'ankaràchàrya, represent what Theosophy calls the lower and higher Manas. The Manomaya Kosha being the mind that occupies itself with all forms of desire and efforts for their attainment; its attention entirely directed outwards towards the aggrandizement of the personality; while the Vijnànamaya Kosha is the seat of intellect and source of every high aspiration, its thoughts turned inwards, intent on realisation of the Self. Shrì S'ankaràchàrya tells us that "the Annamaya Kosha, the physical sheath, corresponds with the Viràj. The Pràna-maya, Manomaya, and Vijnànamaya Koshas constitute the Sutràtman, which is made up primarily of two kinds of matter. One of them is the vehicle of all out-going activity (Kriyà Sakti) and is called

Pràna or life principle, the other kind of matter is the vehicle of all knowledge (Vijnàna Sakti) and constitutes Manas and Vijnàna. Manas is the antaḥkàraṇa, that in which all concrete thought expresses itself. Vijnàna too is the antaḥkàraṇa, and conveys abstract thought. Ànanda is the bliss resulting from knowledge and action, and is the ultimate cause of all, the Kàraṇa Kosha. All these sheaths abide one within the other, the internal permeating the external selves which lie outside; all alike being set up by Avidyà, and formed of Àkàsha, and the other elements of matter. They are ensouled by the true Self lying within them all, who is eternal, unchanging, all-pervading, defined as 'Real, Consciousness, Infinite,' transcending the five Koshas, the Self of All."*

The Annamaya Kosha.

"He verily is this man formed of food essence."†

MEDITATE on the unity of food and Brahman, present as the essence of that eaten and as the eater.

Meditate on the unity of the body with the Viràj the physical expression of the cosmic soul.

* All the quotations in inverted commas are from Shrì S'ankarà's Commentaries on the Taittirìya Upaniṣhat. Detached passages have been put together, so it is impossible to quote page and line, but a careful study of this work will amply repay the student. It is translated into English by A. M. Sastri, B.A.

† *Taittirìya Upaniṣhat*, part 2.

The Sruti speaks of food as Brahman because food is the cause of the birth, existence, and destruction of the universe. First evolved from Brahman through Àkàsha and the other elements it is now manifested as the physical bodies of individual souls, and also as the Viràj, the body of the universal soul, without which Deity could not function.

"Brahman enters creation not literally, but through manifestation of the name and form that have remained unmanifested till the evolution of the Viràj, in Himself. When name and form concealed in the Àtman become differentiated, though in no wise abandoning their essential nature, then Brahman becomes manifold." "Just as," says the Srimad Bhagavad, "a piece of cloth is but the arrangement of the one thread multiplying itself, so too the world of forms is but the appearance in Time and Space of the One Self multiplying Itself."*

So we understand that Brahman is the basic Reality underlying all illusory manifestations of life which to the awakened soul are but gates to the fuller perception of Him in His pervasive glory. "When by meditation the individual unifies himself with the Viràj, then Pràṇa becomes one with Vàyu, the Hiraṇyagarbha; and the Self in that Uphàdi passes beyond the limits of individu-

* Quoted in Vol. III., *Dreamer's Gìtà Studies*, p. 64.

ality and obtains his first glimpse of the Cosmic Soul."

In this connection we should follow up the idea of the microcosm and the macrocosm we considered at such length in our meditation on the Praṇava, and beware of undervaluing the body, which is our only means of growth; the Uphàdi destined life after life to reflect more perfectly the Divine light whence it issued and whither it must return. St. Paul instructed his converts to look on the body as "the temple of the Holy Ghost"*: for knowledge of it is a step on the path to knowledge of Brahman, and Shrì Kṛishṇa deprecated all undue severities practised on it, in these words: "Unintelligent, tormenting the aggregated elements forming the body, and Me also seated in the inner body, know these Àsuric in their resolves."†

Pràṇamaya Kosha.

"Than that, verily—than this one formed of food essence—there is another Self within formed of Pràṇa: by him this one is filled."—*Taittirìya Upaniṣhat.*

* * * *

MEDITATE on the all-pervading Pràṇa, that state of tattvic matter which surrounds the Sun, and

* *I. Cor.*, vi. 19.

† *Bhagavad Gìtà*, 17th Discourse, *v.* 6, Mrs. Besant.

in which all planets move. "The Hiraṇyagarbha manifesting as Vàyu enters into man as his Jivàtman in the Uphàdi of the five vital airs. In the Linga Sharìra there are two Saktis or potentialities, Jnàna Sakti and Kriya Sakti, consciousness and action, Pràṇa is evolved from the latter. Vitality in its Pràṇa out-breathing aspect passes upwards from the heart and traverses the mouth and nostrils; this should be contemplated as the head of the Pràṇamaya Kosha. In its Vyàna aspect the vital principle traverses the Nàḍis, and in its Apàna aspect passes from the heart downwards, these are the right and left wings. The Samàna Vayu, situated about the navel, is the centre of the Pràṇamaya Kosha, the Prithivi Devata (the Earth) is the support of the Pràṇamaya self."

Distinct from the Annamaya Kosha formed of food essence already described, there is a Self within formed of vital air, and quite as falsely imagined to be the Self as the physical body which it fills, pervading it from head to foot; unlike the Annamaya, a homogeneous undivided whole.

The S'ruti says that all senses, both in the microcosm and in the macrocosm, have cast off Death by attaining to the being of Pràṇa or Cosmic Life, Adhidaivata. Those who devoutly contem-

plate the Pràṇamaya Self thus, are merged in the Pràṇa, who is the life of all."*

The Anugìtà tells us "In the midst of all the Life winds (the five manifestations of Pràṇa) blazes the Vaishvànara Fire sevenfold."

The Creative Spirit synthesising this outcome of etheric force, revealing Itself as the heart of the great mystery of breath that makes man akin to the Divine, sevenfold also in manifestation; having dormant in his untried bodies the certainty of Divinity, the potentialities of all planes. The germ of this lies in the divine outbreathing, long antecedent to the three outpourings, the infusion of life into Mùlaprakṛti, rendering all subsequent cosmic activities possible. Then pass on to the later mystery of Sabda Brahman, the divine resonance that echoing through space awoke life, which became the word made manifest; and let Pràṇa issuing in speech from our lips be a sacred trust, and reflect, however dimly, its divine origin.

Manomaya Kosha.

"Than that—verily—than this one formed of Pràṇa—there is another Self within formed of Manas (thought). By him this one is filled.—*Taittirìya Upaniṣhat.*

"MEDITATE on Manas as manifesting Àtman, standing for all external senses: One in essence

* Shrì S'ankarà.

with the Sutràtman, the Lord of the body, the revealer of the Self."

* * * *

"The cause of the Manomaya is Sattva mixed with Tamas, and so we find in it various states." In considering it the fact must not be lost sight of that in Itself the Àtman is wholly passionless, the silent Witness; and is only spoken of as One with Manas because in the early evolution of the race the overshadowing Spirit quickened matter into response to the sensations from which mind was born. Reflected in every sense object as well as in the senses that cognises them, since both are only held together by Its presence: but the light Itself cannot be imprisoned in, or affected by, these vibrations of matter. In Its creative aspect It is the author of the senses, but the pains and pleasures, the violent impacts that plunge man into Saṃsàra, are the work of the vehicles; free from all attributes Atman stands eternally aloof.

The teaching of Shrì Sankaràchàrya is clear on this point. "Consciousness," he tells us, "is the essential of Àtman, it is not distinct from the Self and the eternal manifestations in the shape of sound, etc., of the Buddhi, an uphàdi of the Self, passing through the sense organs assume their form, and become objects of Àtman's consciousness and permeated by It, as sparks of incandescent iron

by fire. It is the Buḍḍhi which gives rise to cognitions, consciousness simply witnesses the absence or presence of Buḍḍhi's modes: there is nothing in Him to cast off, and nothing to acquire. It is the Ego, the understanding, that takes these forms, 'I know,' 'I know not,' with a semblance of consciousness, that lacks or comes by knowledge. As the Àtman beyond all the physical sheaths is indivisible, He cannot put on the different forms referred to, as the mind can. It is Buḍḍhi, the Ego, the mind with reflected consciousness, that assumes the form of external objects, that of the self or knower, and the appearance of consciousness. Such variety and changes do not pertain to the Self who is immutable."

Vijnànamaya Kosha.

"Than that verily—than this one formed of Manas—there is another Self within, formed of Vijnàna. By him this one is filled."—*Taittirìya Upaniṣhat.*

"Meditate on Vijnàna, Buḍḍhi, intelligence, as an attribute of the Anṭaḥkàraṇa, the inner sense. Evolved from Sattva, associated with Rajas, it assumes the form of the I; the first Uphàdi in which the Praṭyagàtmà enters into Saṃsàra. Yoga is the self of the Vijnànamaya Kosha, Hiraṇyagarbha, the universal Ego, its support."

"For beyond the senses are the rudiments; beyond the rudiments, impulsive mind (Manas), beyond the mind, the reason (Buḍḍhi)."*

The pressure put forth by the spiritual Man to expand and adapt the unformed body, which is his only expression in this world of form where he is to acquire experience; that the opaque physical vehicles may transmit the light whence he came. Hurry and unrest are attributes of humanity, Nature is infinitely patient, and the great work of building up the bodies of man is a process only completed by cycles of endeavour; as evolution slowly perfects the vehicles in which the power of Spirit is to manifest. The quickening of this higher Manas we are considering, is the beginning of progress; for as the flower lies hidden in the seed, it nourishes the germ that later will develop into perception; so Shrì S'ankarà tells us that "pre-eminently illumined by the Light of the Logos on account of its close proximity to the Paràtmà, the Vijnànamaya sheath which produces the difference between 'I' and 'mine,' becomes its uphàdi when Jìva passes from one existence to another through ignorance. The Paràtmà is not the Vijnànamaya, which cannot be regarded as eternal."†

* *Kaṭhopaniṣhad Upaniṣhat*, 1, 3, 9.

† Shrì S'ankarà's *Crest Jewel of Wisdom*, *pp.* 191-209.

Speech and external senses should be sunk in the internal Manas, then Manas should be sunk in the Vijnànamaya, the conscious self which lies further inwards even than Manas.

The word Yoga is not to be taken as signifying mysticism only, there are many forms of union, and science exacts of its votaries a Yoga as profound as any devotees. The method of developing this higher intelligence is one, to whatever end the power when awakened may be directed; it is only when a man is self-composed by the practice of meditation that he acquires a knowledge of reality. When the Pratyagàtmà takes possession of His vehicle He forges the link with the Buddhic plane, but lives of arduous endeavour must elapse before the connection can be perfected and the glory that is its unalienable possession flows down into the physical brain. The welding of that chain is Yoga, the union of body, mind, and spirit, consciously with Divinity.

Ànandamaya Kosha.

"Than that verily—than this one formed of Vijnàna—there is another Self within formed of bliss: by him this one is filled."—*Taittirìya Upanishat, v.* 24.

"THE Ànandamaya Kosha is formed of pure Sattva. Meditate on the unity of the Self and

Brahman, and that all pleasures of the senses impermanent, because the Karma producing them is fleeting, are but chips of His eternal bliss. Meditate on these words of a Yogin, "Abiding all the while in the midst of the milk ocean of bliss, I have foolishly spent all this time tasting only such drops of the ocean as come forth from the fire of sense objects": and again on this passage from the *Gita*:* "Pleasures that are contact born verily they are wombs of pain, for they have beginning and ending, not in them may the wise man rejoice." The support of the Ànanḍamaya Kosha is the Paramàṭman, "into this Self formed of bliss man passes on."

* * * *

"To bring about the removal of the idea of agency from the Self, the Śruti proceeds to speak of the Ànanḍamaya, the consciousness of the Pratyagàtman or the true Self, conditioned by the uphàdi of the anṭaḥkàraṇa, manifested as joy, the fruit of knowledge and action. He who realises Brahman as himself passes into the Ànanḍamaya Self which is outside the real Self, of the evolved Universe, in the same way as he passes into the Annamaya; for there is no duality in the real Self, and Brahman is the very Self of him that passes,

* 5th Discourse, *v.* 22, Mrs. Besant.

and bliss is His essential nature. As the Ego Brahman is unaffected by pain or pleasure, which is felt only through the senses pertaining to the Not-Self. The Vedas declare that the senses do not comprehend the Inner Self. Àtman in His essential nature is true bliss, and dwelling in each body separately, becomes divided into objects that give happiness. These reflections are as false as images mirrored in water, as though the bliss which has become separated by the uphàdis is real, still it has the fault of limitation. As the Upaniṣhaṭ says, 'The Infinite is bliss, there is no bliss in the finite, and the Infinite alone we must seek to know.'"

In its highest aspect the Ànanḍamaya Kosha is the Karàna Sharìra, the receptacle of the progress made in every life. The realisation of this body of bliss is the point to which all these meditations on the Koshas have been directed; one by one each sheath has been transcended, the consciousness centred in the higher aspect of the Self that now is only the finest film of individuality.

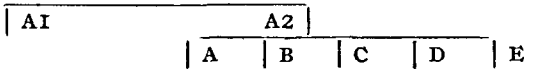
Recognising the transitoriness of the vehicles the spirit in man yearns for reunion with the great Source whence it sprung. "Where one sees nothing else, hears nothing else, cognises nothing else, that is the Infinite."

Abandoning all thought the mind should rest in

this blissful certainty, patiently waiting for knowledge to flow down into the physical brain that has been thus prepared.

Meditation on the Transformation of Gross to Subtle.

DIVIDE each of the five primary elements into two parts as



Keep A1 apart. Divide A2 into five parts. The latter, A2, will give the figure 25, *i.e.*, 5 classes of 5 parts, this mixture constitutes the Sthûla Sharîra, the physical body. The first five primary undivided elements A1 form, Sûkshma Sharîra, the subtle body. Gross and subtle form Brâhmanda, the Universe.*

The five primary elements are:

Âkâsha, ether, evolving sound, hearing.

Vâyu, air, evolving prana, touch.

Tejas, fire, evolving sight, effulgence, Sun.

Apas, water, evolving taste.

Prithivî, earth, evolving smell.

Meditate first

1. On the form of the object seen.
2. On the subtle cause of that visible form.

* *Vedânta Vartika*, p. 17, trans. by B. Nârasimhiah.

3. On the five Jñànendriyas, the knowledge-giving senses, sight, hearing, etc.

4. On Ahaṃkàra, the cause that moves them.

5. On Puruṣha, the real substratum of all.

In the first division of our subject, the form of the object seen, its building up should be considered, the cycles of evolution that have been passed through before it has attained the appearance which it now presents to our gaze.

Secondly, in the subtle cause of that visible form, we carry our minds back to the primary elements from which it springs, the bodies into which it is resolved when it passes from physical to superphysical planes.

Thirdly, in our consideration of the five senses, we must go beyond their manifestations in our present stage and seek to know their causes, and the manner in which they establish the unity between man and nature, nature and Brahman.

Fourthly, in Ahaṃkàra, the power that moves them, we dwell on the I making faculty, that which contacts matter, narrowing everything down to our individual consciousness. Indispensable at the point of evolution which produced it, but to be transcended before we can realise the last clause presented for our consideration.

Fifthly, Puruṣha, the real substratum of all: the universal Spirit present as Âṭmà in every object It

has created, the beginning and the ending, the aim of all evolution.

On the Transformation of the Five Elements from Gross to Subtle.

1. We begin with the gross phenomenal form, such as sound hearing in Àkàsha, Pràṇa touch in Vàyù, the different qualities the elements evolve and express themselves by in the worlds they build up.

2. The natural invariable form, such as movement, freshness in air, moisture in water, solidity in earth, the objects and sensation which the mention of any special element evokes.

3. The subtle form, the Jñànendriyas, root elements, their different modes of expression exemplified by the images created by sound, or as Plato points out, "that which emanates from flame, which without burning gives light, that which abides in ignited bodies even when the flame is extinguished."

4. The all-pervading form, made up of the three Guṇas, Sattva purity, Ràjas force, Tamas inertia, which are the causes of all universes, the motive powers in all activities.

5. The fruition bearing form given for the end which it serves, the purpose of the Spirit, experience, and finally liberation based on the various attributes.

These meditations on the gross to the subtle are intended to enable us to realise the constitution of the physical and subtle bodies of man and the manner in which the powers which he wields and those of the elements are blended; one springing from the other and becoming in this world the expression of cosmic force narrowed to the requirements of frail humanity. Now man is the sport and victim of these elements, but later, when he shall have attained his full spiritual stature, they will fall into subservience to his will, for to the perfected man who knows himself divine nothing is impossible, when he puts forth his power Nature must obey, and submissive own the dominion of her Lord.

Meditation on the Self in All.

DISSOLVE the whole universe in the conscious Self, dissolving the gross in the subtler one. I am that conscious Self, eternal, pure, wise, liberated, secondless, I am the Aum.

Having thus meditated dissolve even this discriminating thought in the Àtman, and remain as the all-full consciousness, like the unmoving ocean.

* * * *

Here we have the kernel of the whole teaching of Eastern Wisdom; the positive assertion of our

identity, not with the body, but with the Creator who decreed its existence as a means for Man to attain knowledge before re-entering into His Being. In the first planetary chain the Archetypal, Brahmà's Body of Darkness; we have as fruitage the Asuras, the mysterious Lords of Darkness necessary for the adjustment of the balance of good and evil.

In the second chain His Body of Day, the creative, the Agnishvatta Pitris, came into being; the Lords of the Flame who, in the building of worlds, send the force of Àtmà into etheric matter, and so render possible the human Pràna, the life side of the permanent atom. The third chain, the formative, His Body of Twilight, brought forth the Barishad Pitris, and seven classes of Monads, our immediate ancestors. The fourth chain, the Terrene; His Body of Dawn is evolving men.*

For, notwithstanding our pride in ourselves, we are still evolving, and the appearance familiar to us now is but a shadow of the glorious aspect awaiting us before our Planetary Logos terminates this cycle of existence; and transfers his kingdom into another Chain of Worlds. When that day comes there will be no doubt possible to Man as to the Self in All, for new senses will have developed in him and he will know what now must largely

* Mrs. Besant's *Pedigree of Man*, p. 21.

remain a matter of conjecture; but if we are to rise to the full possibilities that Future holds for us, it is now in our incomplete bodies we must so identify ourselves with Buddhi, that the promise called forth by the doubting Apostle from the Christ may crown our efforts: "blessed is he that hath not seen but yet has believed."*

The first step towards realising the Unity is the disassociation of the Self from the physical garb it is at present using; the easiest method is to take a person who has reached life's limit, and then look back on the unconscious infant, the merry, mischievous child, the youth dominated by sheer joy of animal life, the mature man immersed in business, middle age with its wider outlook and deeper sympathies; and contrast these many phases with the careworn face and failing faculties of age. Yet the personality we have loved, the moral qualities that commanded our respect are still there, independent of the decaying body which after this review we cannot fail to recognise as the outer husk of the real man; a sheath which the soul utilised in this incarnation and is laying aside for another expression of itself in subtler planes. Truly Life is a mystery to be approached with deepest reverence, the unfolding of Divine Purpose, the using and laying aside of bodies, just

* *St. John*, xx. 29.

as in the Virâj of which Man is a component part, new forms are ever being created and abandoned as the Life develops and passes into other worlds.—"When all difficulties suggested by Màyà have been rejected there remains a self illumined Something which is eternal, without form, unmanifested, indestructible. The wise know that as the Supreme Truth, which is Absolute Consciousness, in which are united the Knower, the Known, and Knowledge, Infinite and Unchangeable."*

Again we are told "The One Consciousness appears in the differentiated form of Jîva or Ì'ṣhvara according as It is or is not associated with egoism. The man who has realised Brahman Nirguna is unaffected by past sin. Following the teaching of the Scriptures he never regards as good and evil mere creatures of Màyà, both one with Brahman. It is to the subtle body that weakness pertains, and when the ignorance, which is the cause of weakness, is destroyed by the knowledge that 'I, the true inner Self, am Brahman'; he realises himself as inherently wise, pure, and free. When a man is wakened from sleep the objects seen in his dream perception are found to have no existence outside the wakened soul; so good and evil remain only as the One Self, and nothing more. The scripture

* Shrì S'ankarà's, *Crest Jewel of Wisdom*, 241-2.

speaks of the destruction of all the sins which accumulated prior to this realisation of Brahman, both in this and past births. 'As the soft fibres of the reed when thrown into the fire are burnt, so all his sins are destroyed.'"* As the last point in our meditation we are told to "remain in the All Consciousness like the unmoving Ocean."

The resistless force of water that to our eyes seems ever in unrest, but whose mighty depths hold the secret of unending calm in the Majesty of its mysterious Being. And so it must ever be with the soul securely anchored in the Eternal, who has renounced the separative formative will, and "dissolving the gross in the subtle" sees the Lord everywhere. Sees Him in the perfection of creation unfolded in the world born of His Màyà; knowing it as illusory yet beautiful as the sunset glory which appears so near and yet cannot be touched even by the bird that seems to soar into the heart of its splendour. Recognising Him in the sinful and the outcast, in the struggling mass of human beings fretting at immutable Law, their eyes blinded and their faith dim, still learning from the suffering they cannot escape from. Senses Him in the Love that strives to bind up wounds, to loose the self-inflicted fetters; seeking out the desolate, striving to dissipate the darkness that encompasses them,

* Shrì S'ankarà notes on *Taittirìya Upanishat*.

with the torch of Wisdom. Then, permeated with this divine knowledge, the Disciple recognises this mighty Universe, known through mind and speech, as in its essence Spirit, One with the Light; knows that whatever illusory form it may assume, however varied its manifestation, underneath are the Everlasting Arms, and the Peace that passes all understanding.

Meditation on Fire.

OUR divine Egos run like a silver thread from the Spark in us, up to the primeval divine Fire.

"The root of Life was in every drop of the Ocean of immortality, and the Ocean was radiant Light which was Fire and heat and motion. Where is the Spirit of the Flame? the Germ is That, and That is Light, the white brilliant Son, of the dark hidden Father . . . the water of Life is the Great Mother. Father, Mother, spin a web whose upper end is fastened to Spirit, the Light of the One Darkness: and the lower one to its shadowy end, Matter, and this Web is the Universe."*

* * * *

In these magnificent words the dawn of Manifestation is painted for us. Father-Mother, the

* *Stanzas of Dzyan*, III., *v.* 6, 8, 9, 10. *Secret Doctrine*, Vol. I., H. P. Blavatsky.

eternal Flame to which no fire on Earth can be likened, descending on the vastness of Space, the veil of the Absolute; and quickening it with the Thought from which all Universes spring. The Light of Lights that to our blinded eyes is darkness, the One Reality, the Noumenon that stands behind the phenomenal appearances familiar to us in this world. And Its mighty creative work effected, into the little lives of men this Divine Flame wills to reflect Itself; "for if mortal draw nigh to Fire, He shall have Light from God."* "Who will extend on every side the reins of Fire to guide the unformed Soul."†

That is why Shiva, the Third Person of the Hindû Trinity, is represented as dwelling in a burning ground, for the impurity of matter must be consumed, before the Fire of Wisdom can extend the reins that are to draw the Spark He has put forth, back to Himself. The final re-absorption of man into Divinity is described by Hermes to his disciples thus: "When the mind does free itself from the earth body, it putteth on its proper robe of fire, with which it could not dwell in an earth body. For Earth does not bear fire, for it is all set in a blaze by even a small spark. And for this cause is water poured round the Earth to be a guard and wall, to keep the blazing of the fire

* *Chaldæan Oracles*, Mead, Vol. II., *v.* 54. † *Ibid.*, *v.* 57.

away. But mind, the swiftest thing of all divine out-thinkings, and swifter than all elements, hath for its body fire. For mind, being builder, doth use the fire as means for the construction of all things; but that of man only for things of Earth. Stripped of its fire, the mind on Earth cannot make things Divine, for it is human in its dispensation."

In the Anugìta the Sage Nàrada says: "The smoke of that Fire which is of excellent glory, appears in the shape of darkness, its ashes are passion, and goodness is that in connection with it, in which the offering is thrown."*

For the angel with the flaming sword spoken of in Genesis, still guards the gates of Paradise; and the sacrifice of our whole lower life, the ashes of every passion, must arise in smoke before the offering is accepted, and we are gathered into the hidden Fire, the Darkness will then make manifest.

"The great announcement of the Simonian tradition, based on Chaldæan mystic doctrines, conveys the same teaching.

"Fire which is above the Heavens is the treasure as it were a great tree from which all flesh is nourished; and the manifested side of the Fire is the trunk, branches, leaves, and the bark surrounding it on the outside. All parts of the great tree are set on Fire by the devouring Flame and

* *Secret Doctrine*, Vol. II., H. P. Blavatsky, p. 599.

destroyed, but the fruit of the tree if its imaging has been perfected and it takes the shape of Itself; is placed in the storehouse and not cast into the Fire.

"For the fruit is produced to be placed in the storehouse, but the husk to be committed to the Fire, for the trunk is generated, not for its own sake, but for that of the fruit."*

We may reflect on Fire as the great mystery underlying all cosmic activity: the primeval Fire quite different to its objective manifestation visible on this earth; that living incarnation of the divine Breath which brought worlds into being, and when the day of Brahmà is over will reabsorb them. In the form in which it functions among us it will communicate itself to all, yet in this passing on of its own substance nothing is taken from it. A burning torch kindles everything with which it comes in contact, but the flame itself is not exhausted; it rises pure and luminous above every refuse cast into it, ever separate from the material that feeds it, the one symbol permitted of Divinity.

In the myth of the Fire tree Simon Magus gives us as a subject of meditation the fall into generation of the divine principle within us all. The Fire is the treasure by which all flesh is nourished, and its objective side is the body, the Tree of Life, which clothes itself in countless illusory forms that while

* *Chaldæan Oracles*, Vol. II., G. R. S. Mead, *v.* 60.

the wheel of Saṃsàra turns feeds the devouring Flame; matter pitting its puny strength against the resistless force of Spirit, and ever reduced to ashes in the conflict. But the fruit of the Tree when its imaging is perfected and it takes the shape of its true self, brought to birth through this long process of purification; is not consumed, but received into the Storehonse that made its growth possible, for the Tree of Life was created for this purpose only, the evolution of the perfected man.

Then Proclus tells us the universal Father "will open for us the ways of Fire lest we drift with the downwards stream"*: and much effort must be made by the individual soul even when the ways of Fire open for him, the lower Astral visions so apt to assail the developing sight must be avoided, for the oracles tell us "ever do they fascinate and draw men from the mysteries, and never so much is God estranged from man, and with living power sends him on fruitless quests, as when in disorder and in discord he would ascend to divine heights of contemplation, with lips unhallowed and unwashed feet."† A warning sorely needed by many of us who resent the arduous training Occultism exacts, and would fain rush unprepared into its holiest secrets.

Simon Magus continues: "the hidden aspects of

* *Ibid.*, p. 62. † *Ibid.*, p. 66.

Fire are concealed in the manifest, and the manifest produced in the hidden, and the manifested side of the Fire has all things in itself which a man can perceive of things visible, or which he unconsciously fails to perceive; whereas the hidden side is everything which one can conceive as intelligible, or which a man fails to conceive."*

To the soul awakened to these great truths the sublime cosmic picture is outlined. "From Fire leaps forth the Genesis of Matter wrought in varied colours. Thence the Fireflash down streaming, dims its fair flower of Fire as it leaps forth into the wombs of worlds, for thence all things begin downwards to shoot out their admirable rays. But when thou dost behold the very sacred Fire with dancing radiance flashing formless through the depths of the whole world, a Flame that hath no shape, from which a voice proceeds; then, hearken to the voice of Fire.†

The Word that was with God, the Word that was God: the eternal Spirit summoning Its own, the music of the Spheres as it swells forth a mighty hymn of praise in adoration of its Creator.

* *Ibid.*, Vol. I., p. 37. † *Ibid.*, pp. 67, 71, 72.

Meditation on the All-Pervading Light.

Serene, rising out from this body and becoming That Supreme Light, man attains to his true Self.

* * * *

SRI SANKARACHARYA tells us that "no not-self, however subtle, exists outside Brahman in time or space. As a burning faggot assumes many forms, so the multiplicity of Àtman is due to the illusion of names and forms; but there is in reality but the One impartible Essence."

The manner in which this Essence permeates man must vary with his capability of receiving It. As Æons have passed before the physical senses reached their present perfection, so the inner senses through which the soul absorbs, knowledge must develop before the great Light that is its bourne can be realised. Yet to the seer we are surrounded by a cloud of witnesses, for existent in the atmosphere of our Earth is a spiritual vortex, the outcome of intense prayer, adoration, and selfless love poured forth for the helping of others. Just as in the third outpouring, the ascending impulse called down divine Life; this devotion attracts a response from the Logos, ever brooding over the world He has created, and His thought quickens this nebula into

a vast spiritual power available for the uplifting and protection of humanity. We may think of it as encompassing us, as one sees the shimmer of intense heat pervade the beauty of a summer landscape. The saint lost in adoration in his lonely cell, the nun bending low in intercession for all sinners before the Shrine, receives and gives out this subtle power. Enveloped in it as in a robe of glory, the martyr faces death unheeding, as one who gazes on the Sun sees nothing while the brilliance lingers.

It comes down and passes through the sacred Elements, as the Host is uplifted before kneeling worshippers. It expresses itself in every sacrament where real faith is present, whatever the religion, or the ritual practised. As the body is stilled, and the life force functions in subtler vehicles, the Yogi rises towards it, for it is the magnet whose irresistible power ever draws the soul in meditation, and when all illusion is removed, self-luminous, an existent reality, it gleams in the Star that for one brief moment flashes over the head of the candidate for Initiation.

Absorbing this supreme Light we see, in the words of the Upaniṣhad, "the Inner Consciousness that shines forth is the very non-dual Bliss, and the non-dual Bliss is the Inner Consciousness. When the knowledge of their mutual identity thus

arises the non-Brahmanness of the 'Thou' ceases, as also the remoteness of the 'That.'"* The chasm between matter and spirit is bridged, God and Man are One.

Meditation on Peace.

He attaineth Peace into whom all desires flow as rivers flow into the ocean, which is filled with water but remaineth unmoved—not he who desireth desire.—*Bhagavad Gîtâ*, 2nd Discourse, *v.* 70, Mrs. Besant.

* * * *

THE Peace here set before us by Shrî Kṛishṇa is not the outcome of the cloistered life, the serenity born of following stringent rules, devised by religious Orders to keep their followers in a soothing atmosphere of devotion, apart from the temptations of secular existence. In all probability one of our many lives may be profitably spent in these restful conditions, to develop powers of concentration in us, and quicken our spiritual perceptions; but it is in the battlefield of the world that we must learn the lessons that result in this abiding peace.

The centre of consciousness in which our evolution is now proceeding is the dense physical, all has to be acquired in a concrete form, stability is the indispensable foundation to every quality reared

* *Keno Upaniṣhaṭ*, pp. 39-41.

on it. So we have learnt to identify ourselves with name and form, and the desire nature as part of the I, holds us in thraldom. On the Pravritti Màrga, the path of outgoing, this was well, for so only does the Self develop the vehicles which enable Him to contact matter, prepare the materials from which He is later to build the house not made with hands, eternal in the Heavens. But when the qualities have perfected themselves, when intelligence, which arose in the first instance from effort to secure for the self objects of desire, reaches a higher standard, and acquiring these objects they cease to satisfy the mind that is becoming conscious of its divine origin; then the Nivritti Màrga, the path of incoming, opens, and what has been a mode of growth is recognised by the self as a hindrance.

Then the Master speaks, and in the midst of the tumult, in the very centre of the storm that encompasses the soul, striving to draw nearer to the great World Heart, the path of return is outlined. "He attaineth Peace into whom all desires flow as rivers flow into the ocean, which is filled with water but remaineth unmoved,—not he who desireth Desire."

The Spirit of Peace itself seems to hover over this vision of the mighty ocean lying placid in the sunlight, its vast depths unconscious of its countless tributaries which have lost all separate existence in

the immensity, whose very quiet is only repressed strength. It has absorbed these lesser waters and holds them in solution; no vestige of difference or earth-taint from their birthplace left, purified, transformed, having yielded up their essence, they rest in the embrace of the great Whole.

The promise of this supreme peace born of storms innumerable is not for the man who escapes from the duties around him into a backwater where the stream of life passes him by; but for the man who courageously faces the world and its temptations, who receives into his perfected nature all desires, that he may recognise their impermanence, a fleeting shadow cast by the great Reality towards which he presses; and so recognising them and knowing their power over humanity, transmutes them into experience for the uplifting of those souls still wandering in the bondage of illusion. Let this be the central thought in our meditation, this transmutation of desire that leaves us unmoved, this acceptance of it as a form in which Iṣhvara has willed to dwell, to use for the furtherance of divine purpose; not a fetter to enchain, but a means of grace for expansion of the personality, a setting free the inward life; and then seeing the Lord everywhere, accepting, but no longer desiring Desire, having obtained mastery over sense objects, we shall be borne swiftly to the Supreme Peace.

Meditation on the Àkàsha.

Conceive so much of the manifested Àkàsha as can be brought within the range of one's own mental view, as Brahman: then merge the Àtmà into It, and It into your own Self. Then think of nothing else, lose sight of Moon, Stars, and Sky.

* * * *

TRANSPORT yourself in thought to a lofty mountain, where the jewelled night, alive with countless stars, absorbs you into its own immensity. Realise that many of those diamond points of light are not as they appear to us, but the Suns of other Solar Systems vaster than our own: that some of the Nebulæ, with their aspect of powdered brilliants, are sunk in Space at such a distance that it takes hundreds of years before their light reaches our Earth; so that we see them, not as they are now, but as they were centuries ago. Yet to their Creator these myriads of worlds, with their, to us, unknown laws, and dazzling possibilities, are but a very little thing.

"The Heavens declare the glory of God: and the firmament showeth His handiwork.

"One day telleth another: and one night certifieth another.

"There is neither speech nor language: but their voices are heard among them.

"Their sound is gone out into all lands; and their words into the ends of the world.

"In them hath He set a tabernacle for the Sun; which cometh forth as a bridegroom, and rejoiceth as a Giant to run His course.

"He goeth forth from the uttermost part of the Heavens: there is nothing hid from the heat thereof.

"Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be always acceptable in Thy sight. Oh Lord, my strength and my Redeemer."*

When the mind has assimilated to its utmost capacity, the beautiful words of the Psalmist, passing beyond this picture of Brahman's manifested Glory, dwell on Âtmâ, which is His gift to His people: an emanation of Daiviprakṛti, the Light of the Logos, the third Principle in the highest Creative Trinity, spoken of by Shrî Kṛishṇa thus: "My Prakṛiti (Mûlaprakṛti) is divided into eight parts;—earth, water, fire, wind, ether, mind, intuition, egotism. This is Aparaprakṛti: (a lower one). Understand my Daiviprakṛti as something distinct from this: as that by which the whole Universe is supported."†

Poured out of His own Being by Brahman, It becomes the life of our Solar Logos, Who communi-

* Psalm XIX., Prayer Book Version, *v.* 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 14, 15.

† Subba Row's trans., *Gîtâ*, chap. vii., *v.* 4-25.

cates It in His turn to the Seven Planetary Spirits for the ensouling of the Worlds over which, under His guidance, they reign: each of these Great Powers imposing on It the distinctive colour of His own Ray. This seeming difference is only the result of human ignorance, of the delusion of separation; to their divine Rulers all these Rays are One, merged in the great white Light, the undivided Àtman that illuminates all worlds, so the S'ruti tells us: "This One Who is in the Man, and That One Who is in the Sun: He is One."*

In our merging Àtmà into the Source whence It sprung, we may find help in Shrì S'ankarà's beautiful invocation of Deity.

"Brahman, destroyer of all fear in those who seek Him; Who, though unborn, appears to pass into birth, and be in motion, though always at rest, and though ever One seems many, to those whose inner vision is dimmed by the perceptions of unreal existence. I am prostrate at Thy feet, oh, worshipped of the worshipful! dispeller of the terrors of incarnation where the darkness of delusion flees away, and I obtain eternal and unfailing knowledge, supreme peace, and reconciliation with the Self."†

These last words bring us to the final point of

* *Taittirìya Upanishat*, Part II.

† Shrì S'ankarà's *Comments on Màndùkya Upanishat*, p. 137.

our meditation, the Aham Àṭmà, "I am Self," because nothing can exist apart from the Power that put it forth, or possess any individuality other than through the Light of the Logos reflected in him. This great truth everyone must realise for himself, the scriptures can point out the way, the teacher can smooth for us intellectual difficulties; but the inward conviction that leads to liberation, Buḍḍhi alone can give us when our whole being lies prostrate before the Lord, illusions conquered, separation transcended; existence understood, as the One alone without a second.

And in that firm conviction we sink into the peace of non-thought, the rest of complete surrender: losing sight of Moon, Stars, and Sky, the splendour of Creation, aye, even of the Divinity in Man; in the Partless Fourth, the dissolution of all Cause, the mystery of Brahman Nirguna.

Meditation on Sabda Brahman.

To thoroughly enter into the mystical aspect of Godhead here presented, we must remember that sound is eternally existent, and that a complete picture evolved by the word spoken is transmitted to, and remains a pulsating harmony in invisible spheres, ready to pour down influence every time the sentence that evolved it is uttered.

This is why St. John tells us that "in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."*

The Aum is the sacred utterance that in the realm of sound expresses the divine vibration that quickened every atom into life; present in its three Màtras or measures as creation, conservation, consummation, it embodies the scheme of evolution, the eternal Trinity that fashions, sustains and destroys.

"The word of glory" (the Praṇava—Aum) is the lower as well as the higher Brahman; it is transcendent, unequalled, having nothing without Itself, unrelated to any effect, and changeless.

The "word of glory" is the beginning, middle and end of all; the I'ṣvara present in the heart of all, having known it thus, one enjoys the peace of eternal Unity.†

Let us begin by looking into the heart, into the bright space of the same size as the thumb of the individual to whom the heart belongs; and there picture the word of glory. When the three letters stand out in living light so that the impression cannot be obliterated, separate them into the three Màtras to which they belong; and meditate long and earnestly on each in turn as follows.

* *St. John*, i. 1.

† Gaudapàda's *Kàrikàs*, 26, 27, 28.

आ

The first divine vibration in sound stands for the Jàgrat or waking state, the Annamaya Kosha, in which the body formed of food is identified with the Viràj, the manifested universe.

This results from the mental image received by our Solar Logos from Brahman on the fifth cosmic plane, descending as Light, the one agent with which the Cosmic Logos works, not indeed Himself creating, but giving the impetus that fashions all universes of which He is ever the One basis.

As the totality of universes are to Brahman showing forth the mighty powers shrouded previously in the darkness of non-manifestation, so the body is to man, his kingdom, fashioned by the primary elements, sub-divided into myriads of tiny lives, over which he reigns supreme, building up or pulling down, according as he recognises, or fails to recognise, his responsibility. As the Universe He ensouls enables us dimly to realise its Creator, so the physical body expresses the divine Man imprisoned in the flesh; he who later, when form and limitation are transcended, will rise above the matter he has conquered, and identify himself with

the great Sacrifice, which alone renders the World and human incarnation possible.

For by that mighty offering,
And through that Life outpoured,
We do receive with gladness
The body of the Lord.

Sabda Brahman, the Word made manifest, present as Vaikharî Vàch, the modified word we utter, His glory brought within human comprehension in this first Màtra of the Pranava.

ओ

The second vibration in space stands for Svapna, the dreaming state, where our souls are freed while the body rests; the astral condition expressed with or without the possibility of return to physical limitations. The Taijasan or radiant aspect of Deity, so named because this intermediate world is swayed by the great Deva forces, the Shining Ones whose body is light and who through the Chakrams, whirling disks of astral force, send down into man's body the impulses worked out in physical life. As the power of the Soul to recognise itself and lose personality in cosmic Unity, unfolds, these centres will become part of man's working consciousness, and the testimony of the glorious band of invisible

witnesses encompass him, and lead him into the certainty that is born of sight, and sight alone.

Hiraṇyagarbha is the basis of this astral world underlying all its activities, though in its essence separate. As Madhyamà Vàch, the middle word, the vibration into which the A passes and loses itself, we contemplate this Light revealed of the great Cosmic Logos.

Truly the Christian creed describes It thus: "Who for us men and our salvation came down from Heaven, and was made Man."

But what they narrow into individuality is a cosmic happening; for the Light, ever seeking higher expression, entered the physical mould, and of It the human soul was born.

ओम्

The last syllable of the divine vibration, the completion of the uttered word, represented in man as Sushupṭi, deep sleep. The Yogin touches it in the Samàḍhi trance, and beyond even this state of ecstasy it may be meditated on as the Ànanḍa Kosha, the body of bliss, the condition of Svarga, where Àtman, freed from all sense objects, is merged in the Source whence It sprung. For in that

Supreme Bliss all our separated blisses attain Unity, there, all desires and knowledge of duality are absent, and the Soul learns that freedom from them is the pre-eminent condition of Àtman. This is the lesson our experiences in the Jàgraṭ, Svapna, and Sushupṭi states are meant to teach us, and for its assimilation "the removal of ignorance alone is necessary. Where an unknown object has to be cognised, an external source of knowledge is needed, the Ego being the perceiver, but Brahman, Who is Himself Consciousness, requires nothing to reveal Him; Consciousness of the Self having unlike all other perceptions, neither a rising or a setting."*

This third Màtra is the pasyantì, perceiving form, of Sabda Brahman, the Cosmic Logos dwelling in thought on the world he ensouls.

Turìyà.

"That which has no parts is the Fourth, indescribable, free from the illusion of experience, all bliss, One without a Second. This is Aumkàra, the unconditioned Absolute.—*Màṇḍùkya Upaniṣhaṭ, v.* 12.

WITHDRAW the mind from the three states on which it has been meditating and dwell on the

* Shrì S'ankarà, *Comments on Taittirìya Upaniṣhaṭ.*

fourth, Ṭurìyà, abstract Deity, devoid of all attributes, yet One with the Self.

Let reason lie quiescent, making no effort to understand, before this Unity beyond thought, the point in which all divine activities merge, Sabda Brahman in Its parà (beyond) aspect of profoundest mystery. Its mighty cosmic task completed, all creation drawn into Its own fulness, where detached from the swirl of evolution, It loses Itself in Parabrahman.

With this sublime conception these meditations may fitly close.

" Kingly Science, Kingly Secret, Supreme Purifier this, according to Dharma, imperishable."

A royal road of knowledge they have opened out before us, may we by continuous effort so assimilate the divine wisdom freely given that in some future life our Dharma* may be propitious and we may find ourselves kingly enough to tread it.

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* *Bhagavad Gìtà*, 9th Discourse, *v.* 2, Mrs. Besant.

Glossary of Sanskrit Words used.

A.

Aum—a sacred word applied to Deity.
Àtmà—The universal Spirit.
Akàsha—The ether.
Apàna—A nerve current known as the downward breath.
Ahamkàra—The I making faculty.
Arùpa—Without form.
Avyaktam—The undifferentiated root of matter.
Annamaya Kosha—The sheath composed of food.
Ananda—Bliss.
Ànandamaya Kosha—Body of bliss.
Asuric—Evil.
Antaḥkàraṇa—The inner sense.
Apas—Water.
Avidyà—Ignorance.

B.

Bhagavad Gìtà—An Indian Scripture.
Brahmà—The Creative Logos.
Buddhi—Wisdom, intuition, reason.
Bràhmanda—The Universe.

C.

Chakras—A centre in subtle body.
Chitta—Memory.

D.

Daiviprakṛti—Light of the Logos.
Dharma—Duty.

F.

Fohat—Electricity.

G.

Gàyatri—Sacred invocation.
Guṇas—The three properties of matter.

H.

Hiraṇyagarbha—One of the aspects of Divinity.
Haṭha Yoga—The Yoga of the body.

I.

Iṣhvara—The Ruler, revealed Godhead.
Ìdà—Left-hand tube of spinal cord.

J.

Jñanendriya—Knowledge-giving senses.
Jàgraṭ—The waking consciousness.
Jìva—The human entity.

Jìvàtmà—The Divine Ego.
Jñàna—Knowledge.

K.

Kuṇdalini — An electro spiritual force.
Krishṇa (Shrì)—One of the world Saviours.
Kriya—Action.
Karma—The law of cause and effect worked out in life.
Karàṇa Sarìra—Causal body.
Kosha—Sheath.
Karmendriya — Organs of action.

M.

Madhyama—Middle.
Manas—Mind.
Mùlaprakṛti—Virgin root of matter.
Màyà—Illusion.
Màtrà—Measure.
Manvantara—The life period of a Universe.
Monad—The individualised divine spark that constitutes man.
Manomaya Kosha — The sheath composed of the lower mind emotions.

N.

Nàḍis—Nerve currents.

P.

Pràjña—Seed of consciousness.
Pralayà — Period of non-manifestation of a Universe.
Pràṇa — Vitality, the life breath.
Parabrahman—The unmanifested supreme God.
Pratyagàtman—The all-pervading soul reflected in the individual.
Paramàtman—The all-pervading universal soul.
Purusha—Spirit.
Praṇava—The sacred word Aum.
Pasyanti—Perceiving.
Pingalà—The right hand tube of spinal cord.
Parà—Beyond.
Prakṛti—Matter.
Pràṇamaya Kosha—Sheath of Vitality.

R.

Ràjà—Kingly.
Rajas—Force.

S.

Shiva—One of the Hindu Trinity.
Sutràtman—An aspect of deity.
Sabda—Word.
Svapna — The dreaming state.
Sushupti—Deep sleep condition.
Sushumna—Spinal cord.
Samàna — The digestive breath.
Saṃsàra — The wheel of births and deaths.
Sakti—Powers, potentialities.

Sruti—Scriptural revelation.
Sattva—Purity. Absolute truth.
Sthûla Sarîra—The physical body.
Sûkshma Sarîra — Subtle body.
Samàdhi—A condition of trance.
Svarga—Heaven world.

T.

Tattva—The *root* elements of matter.
Tanmàtra—The mode of expression of tattvas.
Tejas—Fire.
Tamas—Inertia.
Turîyà—State of absolute consciousness.

U.

Udàna—Breath which terminates life.
Upàsana—Meditation.
Upanishat—Scriptures.
Uphàdi — Vehicle of consciousness.

V.

Vishnu—One of the Hindû Trinity.
Vaishvànara — Creative Logos.
Vâyu—Gaseous ether.
Vyàna — All-pervading breath.
Vijnànamaya Kosha—Sheath of intelligence.
Vedà—Part of Scriptures.
Virâj—Universe.
Vach—Divine word.

Y.

Yoga — Union, a mystic practice.
Yogi—One who practices Yoga.

Women's Printing Society, Ltd., 31, 33 & 35, Brick Street, W.

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Shri Brihad Bhartiya Samaj
on 11 March, 2020